The Saturday Evening Post.

Established Aug. 4, 1821. | HENRY PETERSON & CO., Publishers, No. 319 Walnut st. Phila'a. | PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1871. | Price $3.00 a Year; or, $2.50 if paid in Advance Single Number 6 Cents. | No. 2614.

LINES FOR AN ALBUM.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY ELLA WHEELER.

When I kneel at the throne of God praying for thee,
What shall the boon that I ask of Him be?
Shall I pray that thy life
May know nothing of strife,
And never a line mark thy brow, smooth and fair,
But sweet as a song
Thy life flow along,
Unchecked by shadows, unclouded by care?

Shall I pray that you ever may dwell under skies
As calm and as blue as your beautiful eyes?
That riches and gold,
And wealth all untold
At the turn of thy hand may in plentitude flow,
And thy life as a dream,
In Eden land seem
With nothing of sorrow, and nothing of woe?

Or shall my prayer be that your heart may be pure,
Through sunshine and shadow your faith fixed and sure,
In Christ crucified,
Who now side by side
With God sits enthroned in the city above.
Oh there at His feet
In glory complete
May you dwell, blest with infinite mercy and love.

BROWN JIM.

A Tale of the Sierra Nevada.

(CONCLUDED.)

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST
BY MRS. MARGARET HOSMER,
AUTHOR OF "SAVED BY HYDROPHOBIA," &c.

When they had gone, little Belle, who was growing large enough to miss familiar faces, cried pitifully for her loving friend and nurse; who, to tell the truth, nearly broke his own tender heart in saying farewell to her. But the passing sorrow over, she turned the more clingingly to the remaining two, and "Brown Jim" became daily more and more devoted to the little waif the storms had carried to his cabin door. His young partner shared his feelings, and loved the child in his different way, almost as absorbingly; one good deed the little creature had accomplished already. The quick and somewhat unreasonable temper of the young man was so subdued that his sobriquet of "Spunky" was falling into disuse amongst the old stock, and was not at all adopted by the new comers who could not see its application. The patient affection that cared for the little Belle, and found each keen delight in her baby love, was magically smoothing out the captious creases in his frank young nature, and teaching him the beautiful lesson of forbearance and consideration.

She was growing a great girl, almost three years old they supposed, and she could talk with such a sweet childish lisp of all manner of things, displaying such bright perceptive intelligence as fairly to dazzle her admiring listeners.

"She's done us both good, Billy," said Brown Jim one winter night, as they sat together smoking.

She no longer swung in a cradle, but lay tucked up in a cot bed in the corner, dimpled and rosy in her healthful sleep.

Billy assented to the proposition on general grounds.

"She's a darling," he said, "and she keeps every one laughing with her funny little ways."

"But what I mean's this," pursued his partner, gravely, "you're a sight better tempered, Billy, since you took charge of her. Yer amiable in yer ways—whereas ye used to be pretty firey."

Billy face flushed slightly, as if in proof that the fire was not all extinct, but he laughed good-humoredly the next moment. "Well," he confessed, "may be I have some streaks of temper, but I don't know, people are generally what circumstances make them. I was unfortunate in mine."

"So I've heard you say before," said the old man seriously, and with great kindness of manner. "I don's want to stir up bygones, my dear boy—and I hope ye know that it isn't my way to rile smooth water for nothing; but I want to ask ye, if it wasn't yer own faults that made them circumstances?"

"No, certainly not," answered Billy, with a quick flush in his eye, and an excited tone to his voice; "I have been bitterly ill used, by those who have lived to rue it."

"They'll live to be proud of you, Billy, that's what ye mean, isn't it? Coals of fire, ye know, Billy, that's the only revenge that's according to Scripture."

"It's according to Scripture that those who have striven to ruin and prevent the well-being and happiness of a life they should have blest, should meet with their reward, and they'll find it yet." His eyes flashed as he spoke, and his voice was shrill with anger.

"Brown Jim" laid his hand on his arm.

SAVED FROM A TERRIBLE DEATH.

"I'm a most old enough to be yer born father," said he, "listen to me as if I was, for I've a tender feelin' for ye, my boy. Now ye know where ye was and what ye were up to when I met ye in that saloon in Sacramento. What driv ye to gambling and drinking in a way that never belonged to a nature like yourn to do?"

"I was not myself," stammered the young man, looking abashed at the recollection. "I—I—had rather not go back to that time."

"And ye never will, Billy, for ye didn't appear to advantage then, and that's the truth. Now, I'm not asking ye to tell me yer story, it's an empty life that hasn't some quiet corner that must not be disturbed, and yours may remain sacred forever—all I ask is, wasn't the circumstances something like the ones I dragged you out of by main force the night I found ye in a dirk fight with the Greasers?"

Billy shifted his position, and laying his meerschaum on the table, glanced uneasily at his companion's face, and then looked into the fire. He bit his lip and colored, while he tried to speak.

"Why you know, partner, that there are no drunken Mexicans in the state of New York," he said evasively. "All the trouble of my life began there, and when you met me I was trying to go to the dogs in the quickest and worst way I could find. That was passion. I've got over that. I am calm and reasonable, thanks to you who are the only one on earth I owe kindness or respect to."

"Yer wrong there, Billy; honor thy father and thy mother—according to Scripture. Ye'd lost your way somehow a good while afore I met yer. I respect ye as a partner, and I yearn to ye as if ye was my own flesh and blood, but still I feel that yer a leetle mite wrong somehow, and oh, Billy, my boy, I do wish ye was set right."

Suddenly Billy choked up—a great sob seemed to hang crosswise in his throat and smother his voice.

"There was a girl at the bottom of it all," he muttered, and his face blazed scarlet.

"Of course there was," echoed "Brown Jim," and his own swarthy countenance glowed like a sudden flash of red on a brown autumn leaf.

"It was my own people who struck the blow," the boy went on, with an angry gleam re-awakening in his eye. "She was willing, but my parents raised trouble between us on account of an absurd idea they took into their heads about a barrier to our union. They made her give me up. Yes it was they, who should have loved me, that cursed me. Honor them! By heavens, I hope to see them—!"

"Of course ye do," interposed "Brown Jim" hastily, "and so do I, though I don't even know their names, jest because I love their son Billy, a full-blooded chap with a big heart, but a biling hot temper that steams up and blinds his judgment sometimes."

Thus checked—for the elder man had actually laid his hand upon the excited lips that would have uttered wrathful words—the young prodigal who had left his home in bitterness of soul sank into silence, and brooded over the past.

Their voices in speaking had been more than usually loud, and that of the younger man had rung shrilly through the cabin. The great blue eyes in the cot opened wide and wondering at the sound. Now in the stillness that followed, the spoilt baby slipped from her bed, and stealing across the floor came and laid her curly head upon "Brown Jim's" bosom. Scarcely noticing the strangeness of the incident, he raised her in his arms, and pressing her to his breast covered the pretty white night-dress which was part of the Stockton-bought wardrobe with his great woollen sleeves.

"Billy," said he in a low, sad tone, "ye've knowed trouble, I see, and its fresh on yer mind still. That's the way with them crosses, for awhile they act like a sort of canker, and they eat up every joy or pleasure there is in life; but by-and-by they fall into a kind of dust that chokes ye up a bit, and takes the freshness out of things, but don't spile yer taste and sight and feelin' like the first blow. I knowed a man that lived through 'em all, and he'd tell ye to hope and trust in the Lord always, according to Scripture. Billy, if he was here—"

The child on his lap put up a pair of soft, rosy hands, and stroked his face; he kissed them noiselessly as they flitted over his mouth and went on:

"This here man was a rough; one of the kind that was born coarse in the grain, and hard to be smoothed into shape. He knowed it, and feeling that he wa'nt made to shine, took to wandering ways naturally, seeing that he couldn't never hope to amount to much at home. Well, while he went sailing here by sea, and journeying there on land, most of his folks died, and when he come back a full growed man there wa'nt many that knowed much about him. I don't know as I can tell ye what kind of chap this man was inardly, for he wa'nt given to studyin' up his own feelins much, and didn't understand 'em as a general thing till they made themselves known to him. So it happened that he'd never thought nothing at all about falling in love, or picturin' what kinder young woman he'd fancy, till his eyes fell on her suddenly, and the thing was done. She was a little girl, far too young and pretty for him."

Here "Brown Jim" paused, and looking steadily down on the little head of pale gold piled up in shiny waves upon his bosom, seemed to struggle hard to swallow some strange passion awakened by the memory of another man's love.

"She was sort of left in his hands, being the 'dopted child of an older brother who had died. She had no one to turn to but him; she was desolate and friendless, without a home or any way of getting one. This here man wa'nt poor, mind ye; he'd plenty to buy her all she could desire, and that kinder give him courage to ask her to be his wife. She was such a clinging little thing, and felt her loss so much that she was glad to turn to any one, so she turned to him; but the man thought it was love; being a stupid chap, he took her at her word and went straight up to heaven in his great joy. He stayed there nigh about a year—and come to think of it, Billy, he hain't no reason to repine, though he lived in infernal torture for many another. Ye see, 'tain't every one as has a whole year of heaven in their lives, and this man's was pure bliss. He might have seen through the poor child's feelins if he hadn't been sorter blinded by the light of his own joy; he might have even guessed the truth if he'd once felt the least doubtful, but he wa'nt. So he went on till that wonderful year was over, and he had to go to Mexico about some property that was in danger and he couldn't bear to lose, seeing how lovely fine feathers made his pretty bird. There he took the cholera and was brought nigh unto death, but in spite of his torments he thought of her, and made a will that left her everything, and putting it in the care of two Americans, he sent it to the Consul's all regular, 'cording to law. That was all he knowed for a time; after a big struggle in his heart to say good-by to her, he lay still and the torture was past.

"When he come back agin to life there was a couple of Greaser women a rubbing him, and his jints was cracking as if they was bein' thawed out of ice. Poor souls, they thought they'd done a big thing for him to bring him back from the jaws of death; but there was a time when he could have cursed 'em for not letting the grave swallow him. It was a long while afore he could stand on his legs, and a still longer one before he could start on his journey home. His head was kinder weak and muddled; none of his thoughts were clear, except that he had been brought back to life after he'd ceased to belong to it. He realized that the poor child at home would have a fearful shock, and he trembled and turned deadly cold with the thought of the joy that must follow when he appeared before her alive and well once more."

"Brown Jim" stopped speaking, and passed his hand nervously over his face and forehead; he moved uneasily in his chair and coughed a dry and husky cough, while his companion changed color and seemed no less perturbed by the recital.

"I hadn't oughter set out to tell this," said the miner; "it's a worryin' sorter story, and I'll cut it short. He started home, but didn't git there; he was called back to Mexico before he reached New Orleans about some law business that promised to close every day, but spun itself out for months. Finally he got clear and made for New York. I'd oughter told you that his wife had a sister pretty near her own age that was living down east. Ye see there was a pair of orphans left, and when his brother took one, a Boston man took the other, and they hadn't met in years. When the poor wretch came crawling back from his grave, as ye may say, he found his wife was in Boston, staying with this sister, who was but lately married, as he heard. He made himself known to no living soul, but followed her there, and being kinder hungry for a sight of her, peeped about to git a look through the winders before he should sorter break the strange tidings of his coming back by degrees. It was a pretty place, a cottage in Roxbury, with a porch and long windows hung with vines. It was the summer time, and there was but little light in the parlor; but the poor chap was all eyes, and he caught a glimpse of her as he turned the street corner and came in view of the house."

"Brown Jim's" voice was so hard and dry that it was almost inaudible, and Billy was moving his seat backwards, so that he sat almost out of the range of his eye. It was a very simple story to work so great a change in a listener's face. The ruddy, handsome fellow was white and frightened-looking, and he seemed to desire to shrink out of sight of his companion.

"There ain't much more to tell," said the speaker, "and I'll make a few words do it. He saw his wife, and not content with that, he crept near her too. She had a sweet voice, and it never sounded sweeter than it did that night as she spoke in a quiet, cheerful way of little things her sister brought to mind. All at once the woman said, 'You are too young and pretty to be a widow always, and young Ferris is a handsome fellow.'"

Billy gave a sharp cry, like the sound that one would make who saw a heavy weight about to descend and crush him, then caught himself in the utterance and bit his lips fiercely.

"But the man never said a word," said Brown Jim; "he listened and heard it all, but never spoke. He heard the very life of his soul say she was sorry that he was dead, but knew he must be happier away from a poor young thing that suited him as ill as she did—that she knew he was good and true, and so she had tried to forget his looks and ways, and like him for the sake of the kindness he showed her. She wiped away just such tears as he had seen her shed in playful pettishness, and said calmly, 'No matter how much I love Ferris, I shall never forget poor Jim.' These was flooring words, Billy, but they lifted this miserable chap right up. He stood where he could have put his hand in through the curtains and green things and laid it right on her head, but he never made a motion; he looked in steady, for he knowed he was taking a last eternal farewell. 'She's my wife yet in the law, but she's give the heart I never had to another man, and for the death I've died for her there ain't no earthly resurrection;' and he writ out in his own soul with his heart's hottest blood an act of divorcement, and he said, 'She is free.' The heavens above seemed to come together with a crash as he turned away, and in the great empty, desolate world he longed most for a grave down in the place where they'd buried the boys that died of cholera in Mexico. Billy, my dear boy, ye see this little blossom that's dropped off into her innocent baby sleep on my breast, well you and her is the only things I care for in the world. That's why I've told you this story, though I can't see my own meanin' as clearly now as when I begun: maybe I don't feel equal to painting its moral. It's late autumn with me now, but I ain't without some sunlight. These little curls," and he ran his hard fingers gently and tenderly through the golden threads, "have brought more shine on 'em into my heart than I thought could ever find itself in such a rusty place."

No word did the listener to this disjointed story vouchsafe in reply; he was naturally a frank and free-spoken youth, now he seemed to shrink out of sight and into silence. His companion did not heed the changed mood into which he had fallen. He rose softly and tiptoed across the floor with his little burden, laying it carefully in its forsaken bed, and patting the glowing cheek to rest as he gathered the clothes around the nestling form.

Suddenly Billy broke out in a hoarse voice with a distressed and almost distorted look of eagerness for the reply.

"You said you come from St. Louis, and belonged altogether to the west and southwest. Did—did you—I mean, was that your home?"

Brown Jim answered without looking up, still bending over and watching the pretty little Belle.

"Oh, I'm a kinder Ishmael. I've been everywhere, and I never was contented to stay in any one place so long before. Do ye know, Billy, I think I'll lay my bones among the red-woods on the hill there. It's a pretty place enough, and right near the good old river that's been real generous to me. I'm glad of it now for little Belle's sake."

That was all he said that night, and poor Billy seemed in nowise inclined to draw him out of his silence. He rose and went out into the cold damp night air and stayed so long abroad that his partner stretched himself upon his blankets and lay wondering what he found so attractive under the dark and cloudy sky.

From that night forward the young man was changed in looks and manner, and acted like one who was partially deranged, much to the astonishment and concern of his partner.

He was not only silent but distant and moody. When spoken to he would spring up as if he had received a sudden blow, and he avoided his old friend as much as he had before cultivated his society and confidence. One thing was particularly observable, he would not sit down to eat with him or share the twilight hour of play and frolic with their mutual pet—little Belle. Not that his manner evinced anger or dislike, on the contrary he would occasionally dart a look towards the thoughtful miner full of self-reproach and agonized entreaty that would fade into a mysterious mingling of shameful anxiety and distress. He was no longer himself in any way, not even when he fondled the child for whom his love seemed unabated. He would hide his face in her bosom, and turn away from all observation to give way to affection his every glance at her bespoke. He took to carrying her off into the red-woods where he would walk hour after hour like a tireless sentry with the little one in his arms long after she had fallen asleep there.

"What's wrong with the poor lad?" murmured "Brown Jim" to himself sadly, "his troubles has took a fresh start and makes him kind o' wild, and what's worse he seems to feel somehow sorter out of me."

Strange to tell this odd state of affairs not only continued but increased, and Billy ceased to take an interest even in that most exciting subject rich paying dirt. The winter was a mild one, with few storms, and the miners were able to work almost every day. Billy neglected his claims, and the men he now employed to dig for him had it all their own way. "Brown Jim" remonstrated with him.

"I don's ask ye what's up," he said with friendly earnestness, "but yer a young man with the world before ye, why should ye want to go against yer good fortune, and upset yer own luck?"

Billy listened respectfully, as he always did when his partner spoke, but he offered no reply beyond a muttered "It didn't matter much how things went."

It was a day or two after this unsatisfac-

tory conference that they both happened to go into a sort of store or general express agency but lately established on the Bar. "Brown Jim" wanted to send down to "Frisco," as he called the metropolis of the Pacific, for some little toys for Belle, and Billy, who had preceded him a few moments, was just inquiring when the next steamer sailed as he entered. The younger man left the desk and made way for his partner with an abashed air, not stopping to hear the clerk's answer to his question.

"Brown Jim" looked at him earnestly.

"Are yer looking for any one, Billy?" he asked. His voice was sorrowful, and his manner almost timid as he looked at his estranged companion with a curious expression of saddened interest.

"Looking for any one?" echoed Billy, moving hastily away.

"I mean from the States, ye know, ye were asking about the steamer, I thought."

"Here's a letter for Billy—anyhow," said a fellow-miner who had been glancing over the list. "Yes, Billy, here's a letter for you as sure as you're born."

"Where?" cried the young man excitedly, his face flushing scarlet. "How do you know my name? Give it to me, I say."

He snatched it from the clerk's hand, who laughed as he read the old superscription.

"Spunky Billy, at Brown Jim's Bar, Mokuloume."

"Well, that's a direction for you," he said merrily.

"It's from Evergreen, and he knew no other," exclaimed Billy, apparently intensely relieved that his friend's ignorance was as great as it was. "It's partly to you, sir," and he turned towards his partner without looking at him; "we'd better go up to the cabin."

So they went, and there the younger man read the epistle aloud, while the little Indian boy they had trained into sub nurse and general house-servant cooked the supper and played with Belle.

It was from Cambridge the young man wrote, and he apologized in the beginning for knowing no better name by which to address his late associates. If it had not been for the absurdity of directing a letter to the ridiculous titles they had known each other by, he should have written to them long ago, but now he felt the necessity of communicating something that had just come to his knowledge concerning the parentage of little Belle. At a house in Boston, where he had been lately introduced as a visitor, he saw a picture of a baby so like the little one he had left behind at the Bar, that he was impelled to ask the lady of the house whose child it was that bore so strange a resemblance to their little Belle. The inquiry made her sorrowful, and with much feeling she related the circumstances which Evergreen proceeded to repeat, adding that he was so well convinced that the little Minnie of his friend's story and the child they had rescued from the Makuloume were one and the same, that he had assured the poor lady so, and begged his late companions to aid him in restoring the dear little creature to her relative's arms.

The lady friend, about whom he maintained a little bashful ceremony in every mention, had a sister married to a sea captain who sailed to California by the way of Cape Horn early in 1851. Finding such promise of fortune as dazzled almost all the early arrivals, he had sold his ship and gone up into the mines, writing to his wife such glowing accounts of the wealth with which the soil teemed, that she felt they would soon be amply repaid for the separation by the success he was certain to meet with. Another letter or two in the next few months equally glowing, and then the correspondence stopped, and for nearly a year she had remained in such distraction and suspense that she was eager to put an end to it by joining a family about to sail for San Francisco, and with her little girl, the sweet little Minnie, whose picture attracted the young man's attention, the search for her husband that ended so disastrously. The late captain's story was a tale common to half the miners who have dug California soil—elated at first into extravagant hopes, disappointment reduced him to the deepest despair. From the wildest expectations of success he soon sank into nerveless dejection, and foolishly preferred silence to a confession of his failure, not calculating on the fears it would create at home. After passing from one grade of wretched experience to another, he was glad to ship home as an inferior officer, where he arrived a few months after his wife had sailed in search of him. All the inquiries he had made in frantic self accusation brought him no other explanation of her loss, than that she had left the friends she accompanied to San Francisco and gone up to the mines to find an old mining partner of her husband's. The terrible floods of that heavy winter set in very shortly afterwards, and she was never more seen.

"Now," said Evergreen, "was not this poor lady and the one that we laid in the little grove of red-woods one and the same person? Her poor sister, and the unhappy husband for whose love she lost her life, are painfully excited at the thought, and I have gained my uncle's permission to carry out the plan of reuniting the child to her eager relatives."

"Brown Jim" groaned. "The boy's turned a fool," said he angrily; "that kind of writin' don't sound like him nohow. This child ain't in need of no relatives while she has us, is she, Billy?"

He caught up the little sunbeam who was flitting about in her busy play and strained her to his breast with a troubled and almost affrighted air.

"Yer all right, ain't ye, my little queen?" he asked with trembling fondness. "Ye love old Uncle Jim, don't ye, my sunny-haired birdie?"

The struggling little one, who half-resented so unceremonious an interruption of her play, gave him a hasty round of kisses on each cheek and half buried herself in his beard in an energetic embrace. Then she vigorously disengaged herself and ran back to her baby-house on a box in the corner, where she was cooking a bit of dried apple and three white beans for Poncho the Indian boy.

Billy said not a word but went on reading, when his partner again turned his face towards him.

"A journey can be accomplished in three months, which will include our vacation here. My uncle approves of my making it under the circumstances, (these words were underlined) and I need not try to express to you the joy with which I shall greet my dear old friend once more.

"Truly and affectionately yours,
"EDGAR IRVING."

"Edgar Irving!" echoed "Brown Jim" in blank amazement. "Who's he?"

Billy, thus called upon, answered:

"You know old 'Granite's' name was Irving, for he had a letter or two directed to him here."

But "Brown Jim" would receive no explanation on the subject. He was strangely and unaccountably wrathful and excited.

"He's gone and turned out a fool, so he has," he said, striding about the cabin excitedly. "That there child's as much ourn as if she'd been born to us both. She's ourn 'cording to Scripture, Billy, and I b'lieve it would stand in law, too. You fished her up as much as ever Pharaoh's daughter fished up Moses, and she kep' him in spite of his folks. If you'll stick to it they can't get her away from us. Her mother's buried up in the red-woods, and her spirit's a lingerin' round the spot. Her father wa'nt a likely kind o' man, or he'd never left the mines dead broke. Consarn that fool Evergreen. The Lord forgive me for swearin'. Amen."

In a few moments he sat down again, and supporting his head in his hands hid his face.

His companion watched him with troubled interest, and cast looks of strangely mingled feeling furtively upon him.

By-and-by the sturdy figure began to shake, and a deep groan that seemed to rend the heart it came from sounded through the little cabin. The young man rose—he was pale and terribly overcome with feeling. He drew near to where his partner sat, with his head falling forward and his whole form heaving. He stood a moment silent and trembling; then he fell upon his knees before him, and tried to draw away the labor-stained hands through whose hard brown fingers the tears were streaming.

"Mr. Barrett," he said, "I solemnly declare to Heaven that I wish I could die to-night to save you from the sorrow of losing little Belle; and no one shall take her from you, if I can prevent it. I have been unworthy your goodness and confidence, but I only wish I could give you my wretched life to show you how little I meant to deceive you."

He was convulsed with an emotion that his words did not express, and their meaning seemed lost on the man he addressed, who started at the sound of his own name as if he had received a sudden wound.

The one who uttered it seemed scarcely less surprised and even muttered some excuse.

"Forgive me, partner—I was thinking and I forgot; I—I cannot bear to see you suffer so."

The miner recovered himself and controlled his emotion.

"Billy, my dear boy, it's like you to have a big heart," he said, with something like pleasure in the tone of his voice.

He laid one of his rough hands on each of the youth's shoulders and smiled kindly on him.

"I declare you've grow'd to be as near to me in feelin' as if you belonged to me; and I'm thankful that a sort o' cloud there was between us, has cleared away. Ye see it give me a start to hear my name, for I didn't think there was a man on the Bar that know'd it; but as I hain't no reason to feel a shamed of it, it's all right. Now about this trouble—for it is trouble, and heavy trouble too, I won't deny. I've had time to think, and I feel that I was goin' agen sense and duty. We're bound to do what's right, ye know, Billy; and I humbly ask the Lord to put us in the straight way, and give us the strength to go ahead in it."

He rose, and going to the cabin door looked upwards at the red light in the early evening sky just over above the red woods. He was a simple minded man of large faith, and his looks followed his thoughts in strong belief.

His companion watched him with an expression of deeper reverence than is often bestowed on a rough figure in mining dress and boots almost reaching to his middle.

By-and-by they both turned silently towards their evening meal which they sat down and shared together—more in concert than they had been since that unlucky night when "Brown Jim" had unwittingly excited his young friend by the homely story of another man's love and grief.

This was in the early spring, and Billy, who had almost deserted his own interest, suddenly awoke to it again, and went to work at a new hydraulic force his partner had just secured for washing down the banks of a partly worked claim. Then, to his pained surprise, Brown Jim discovered that he had been reviving the plan of leaving the Bar, and had actually made out papers conferring all his rights and claims on the partner he had meant to desert secretly.

"It's part of his trouble, poor fellow," was the conclusion the elder miner came to when he learned this abandoned intention, "and he was trying to slip off on the steamer when Evergreen's letter came. Well, out of evil comes good, for he seems more easy in his mind ever since."

The prospect of the little fairy who brightened their coarse lives with her radiant presence being taken away from them, only endeared her the more to her loving guardians, who watched her every motion, with miserly eyes hoarding treasures of delight; but as Evergreen had stated no time for coming, and two or three weeks rolled by without further tidings, they began to hope there would be nothing more done in the matter, and took courage.

It was in early May when one of "the boys" having been down at Skulltown, a dozen miles below the Bar, returned to report the startling news of Evergreen's presence.

He went straight to "Brown Jim's" cabin with the tidings, and gave a glowing account of the party.

"There's three of 'em," he said, "and you wouldn't know Evergreen no more'n if you'd never seen him. He's rigged out real tremendous in the best of store clothes, and acts and talks quite the gentleman. I tell you, college's a wonderful place; and I mean to take a turn at it myself when I strike my pile."

"Is there anybody with him?" asked "Brown Jim," looking worried, and changing color despite his efforts at self-control.

"Yes, two of 'em. There's a fellow they call the Captain. I used to know him up at 'Young's Hill'—though he warn't quite so well got up in them days. Why, I suppose he was about the most cleaned out chap at poker you ever see. And there's a very pretty girl—I reckon a daughter spoke of her first, for manners—she's enough to make a fellow's mouth water; one of the real sweet, gentle kind, with melting eyes. Oh, my!"

Quite overcome with the power of recollection, the messenger turned to go away, when "Brown Jim" asked—

"How are they coming—have they got a stage, or are they riding on horse-back?"

"Why, that's what I meant to tell you—but thinking of the pretty little creature took it out of my mind. They stopped at 'Whiskey Dick's,' and he give 'em Spanish horses; they was the best he had, no doubt, but though it don's mind 'Evergreen' or the Captain, I'm kinder fearful about that pretty little soul, if she mounts that old rip Bonito, the one you was throw'd off last fall; and as sure as you're born, that's the one 'Whiskey Dick' told her she could have."

"'Whiskey Dick's' a fool, and the woman will be killed," cried "Brown Jim," jumping up impetuously, and rushing out of his cabin. "When did they start?" he asked, stopping as he reached the turn that commanded the road view. "There's no danger on the lower ledge, but when they come to the gulches, it will be all over with 'em. They don't understand horses; Evergreen never know'd which side to mount even—and the Captain ain't likely to be much better. Come, Billy, let's go down the road a piece; we may save trouble—and I can't sit still here a twinkin' of it."

The younger man did not share his comrade's excitement, but he nevertheless obeyed instantly, and starting down the open road, they were soon joined by a half-dozen loungers, whom the miner's explanation of the possible danger of "Evergreen's" party, deeply interested.

It was needless alarm, as it seemed when they came in sight of the three riders about a mile below the Bar, their outlines dimly discernible in the dusk of evening. They came along gayly, the lady riding between. It was cool weather, and all California evenings are fresh and breezy; so she wore a gay scarf wound round her figure over her riding-dress, and her plumed hat drawn close over her face.

"There's 'Evergreen' at the right—I know him in spite of his fine clothes," said "Brown Jim," and his voice trembled a little at the recognition; for he had liked the young man sincerely, despite his late wrath at his untoward discovery.

The next minute the miner clutched his partner's arm, and uttered a suppressed scream—

"Does he know that the river runs up into that little canon there he's coming to; or does the blind fool mean to ride straight into it?"

They stood still as if rooted to the spot, while the three figures below rode up the bank, talking eagerly, and never once glancing towards the spell-bound miners, or the narrow gorge they were approaching.

"Hold up!" yelled "Brown Jim," suddenly finding voice, and shouting in his ungoverned terror, till the broad bank echoed. The chasm before them was but a few feet in width, but the mountain springs had broken through and tunnelled it into a deep ravine; while branching off the old road, thus rendered impassable, was a new one cut in the shelving bank higher up, but in the dim light rendered indistinct save to accustomed eyes.

The elder miner was strong and lithe as a panther; with a running leap he bounded down the road over the canon, and had caught the bridle of the rearing horse on which the lady sat, just as "Evergreen's" startled steed had thrown him, and he rolled over backwards down the soft bank of shelving earth towards the river.

"Take her off," screamed "Brown Jim" to the distracted Captain, who was madly pulling on the sharp bit in his horse's mouth, and causing the foaming beast to rise on his haunches. "get her foot free of the stirrup. Back ye born devil, back!"

This last cry was uttered as the fiery Bonito rose in the air, flinging his hoofs wildly, and snorting in infuriated fright; the woman clung feebly to its flying mane, but her little hands seemed nerveless with terror, and her companion was too fully absorbed in his own alarm and distress to aid her.

The horse, rendered desperate by the iron hold of the miner on his bit, reared and sprang, almost lifting the heavy man from the earth, in its mad strength.

"I'll manage him; but you must slide off, for I can't help ye," cried "Brown Jim" to the terrified woman, but before she could take the meaning of his words, Billy's arm was round her, and she fell back senseless in his grasp.

Then the miner relaxed his strained hold on the frantic Bonito, but it was too late, for his hand was twisted in the bridle he had first caught; the horse slipped on the wet earth and crumbling rocks, struggled to regain its footing, plunged, slipped again, and rolled over and over with the entangled man till it reached the rocky bottom of the stream below, and there they lay quite still.

"There's been trouble down the road, boys, and 'Brown Jim's' had an awful fall," cried a frightened young miner, rushing in upon a newly-started game of old sledge in one of the cabins. "They're carrying him and a woman up the hill, and Billy's nearly mad, for he thinks the dear old fellow's done for."

The cards were flung helter skelter wherever they chanced to fall, and the players hurried breathlessly to the now surrounded cabin into which the long, gaunt figure of its owner was being borne, with the light of a dozen lanterns flashing on his white, composed face.

They laid him on his blankets, and when one of them was about to ride off to the next camp for a doctor, he tried to stay him.

His voice was very faint, but sustained and audible. "Don't let him go, boys," he said; "it's no use. I've got the hurt there's no cure for, and I'm bound to go, trustin' in the Lord 'cording to Scripture."

A man came and threw himself beside him on the floor, and crying out that he loved him, and would gladly die with him, laid his head on the woollen-shirted breast that heaved painfully, and kissed and clung to it as if there were not a witness in the cabin to look upon his grief.

No critic's eye marked it; those who saw it through their own tears called it neither foolish nor unmanly in Billy to bewail the glazing eye and fading breath of the man they all loved and honored. "Brown Jim," no longer dark but blanched to deadly pallor, lay smiling in his death throes, for coarse and unlovely as he seemed, his heart was full of sensitive tenderness that drank in affection, and revelled in the draught.

"Where's my baby?" he murmured softly.

They brought the weeping, frightened little creature to his side, and lifting his powerless arm, put it around her; he struggled to raise the other over Billy's shoulder, who seeing the motion held it to his heart, and coming very near the whitened lips, asked,

"Did you know whose life you gave your own to save?"

At first the eyes that answered him had no meaning in their gaze, but presently they turned towards the baby's cot, where they had laid the half unconscious woman. She was coming to her senses now, and "Evergreen," whose fall had scarcely bruised him on the soft earth he had rolled over, begged them to stand back and give her air, and hung about her with nervous tenderness, holding wine and water to her lips.

She sat upright, and pushed the damp, disordered hair back from her face. She was fair and lovely, with a sweet, tender, trusting face, and a look of child-like, appealing helplessness. The miners moved aside to give her room, and her timid, troubled eyes fell suddenly upon the dying man, whose gaze, like a flame that leaps up before it goes out for ever, burned into her inmost soul.

"My God—James Barrett, are you come back from the grave!" She gave a frightened scream, and hid her face, shuddering, as she said the words; but the miner, struggling, tried to raise himself more towards her.

"I'm going there," he gasped faintly. "Let me—let me touch my wife—"

No one dared to move, but the startled woman, trembling and shivering, sank upon her knees, and crept towards him.

He looked upon her with eyes whose blazing splendor overspread his face, and made it beautiful.

"Are ye mine, my darling?" he whispered—his voice was almost gone.

"Oh, Jim, I've mourned for you, I have, I have," was all she could say.

"There's nothing to stand between us now—and I'm half-way to Heaven. Under the red-woods, Billy, ye know. It's the fall of the year for me, but there's light yet—dust to dust, but in the hope of the life everlasting—'cording to Scripture."

Billy caught the falling head, and bowed his face above it, while "Evergreen" lifted the terrified widow and the sobbing child and led them away to comfort them.

The next evening, at sundown, after the fashion of quick burials in California, the miners in solemn array, bore the coffined form of their honored companion up the hillside to rest under the shade of his favorite red-woods, and a group of sorrowing faces bent above the open grave as the first dust fell on the unconscious sleeper. His widow was too ill to follow in the train, but his late partner was so sincere a mourner, that he and the little child, whose hand he held, could scarcely be drawn away from the clay mound they heaped above him.

"It's a good place for the dear old boy," said "Tunnel Bob," one of the few old friends remaining on the Bar, "you know he loved the river, and said he should never want to be out of sight of it. You can come here often, Billy, and it 'll seem as if we were sitting beside him. There's nothing lost for him, you know, for he's gone to incorruptible riches, being a good and faithful servant, and an honest miner."

Billy was silent, but he wrung the homely sympathizer's hand, and intimated by a motion that he would stay and walk there awhile. In truth it seemed the only place left for him in the world; and being there almost always, it was not strange that he should two days after meet the pretty woman whose coming had been so tragic in its effect.

She hurried past him and knelt beside her husband's grave to take a last farewell, for having proven little Belle to be her sister's child, the party were to return the way they came, taking with them the property the dead miner bequeathed his foster daughter.

The young man moved aside coldly and turned to go, but the widow, rising with flurried haste, intercepted him.

"Do not look at me as if you were my enemy, Mr. Ferris," she said, pleadingly. "I know it is better to say nothing of the past. Your friends were right and we were foolish, and—and—it was a great mistake. I have been so terribly shocked by my husband's sad death, that although I believed him dead years ago, it is a new and bitter grief. You are an old and valued friend of his and Edgar's too, and I hope you will forgive, that is, not feel— Oh, Mr. Ferris, forget the past, and please don't make me feel that you think harshly of me."

She looked at him with timid, gentle eyes, full of tears and very winning. But he was a bitter-hearted youth, whose own wrongs and the sorrow he felt for the dead blunted the beams of her fascinations, so he said cruelly:

"You are not worth one thought of the great heart that lies mouldering here, and your presence is a mockery of the dead."

She cried piteously, and called him harsh and unkind; then she stooped and kissed the earth, and gathered a tuft of grasses to take away and treasure in memory of her husband. But in her hurry thoughts she argued secretly that he was fiery and unreasonable to blame her, which poor Jim never would have done, and that Edgar was more refined and elegant than he, after all.

She proved her constancy to this last decision by marrying him some six months afterwards, as William Ferris heard, and laughed bitterly in hearing. "For," said he, "if it hadn't been for my youth and father and mother, she would have been my wife in New York, after I had met her by chance at the poor sister's James Barrett helped to bury without my seeing. It's an empty, foolish story, and if it were not for the noble heart its telling broke, I should laugh at its mad folly."

Brown Jim's was known as a mining camp long after its founder lay mouldering in dust; and his partner, flourishing in worldly goods, became a prosperous banker.

A pretty town, with some commercial interest, now occupies its site, and the red-wood's clumps a little cemetery, whose finest monument is a beautiful marble shaft raised in memory of James Barrett by his friend and partner, William Ferris.

☞ SLANDER.—Even where there is real evil to expose, one should pause a while before the utterance of words which may drive the sinner to greater evil. But what shall we say of one who can tell a deliberate lie, or repeat that which conscience tells her was the fabrication of another's brain? I say *her*, because scandal is woman's greatest fault. I know hardly any who can refrain from promulgating a wicked story, even though salve is added to the conscience by a "I don't believe it, poor thing."

☞ Sir Walter Scott's wife expressed herself with regard to her husband's indiscriminate hospitality, by remarking that she saw no difference between Abbotsford and a large hotel, except that at the former nobody paid.

☞ A Wisconsin lover wrote his sweetheart: "There is not a globule of blood in my heart that does not bear your photograph."

☞ "It is a poor rule that won't work both ways," exclaimed the boy, as he threw the ferule at the school-master's head.

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

PHILADELPHIA, SATURDAY, SEPT. 2, 1871.

NOTICE.—We have no connection with, nor any personal knowledge of a concern calling itself the "Peterson Publishing Company," and professing to be located in *New York*. If there be such a concern, it has no connection with either H. Peterson & Co., or T. B. Peterson & Bros., of Philadelphia.

"The Cock of the Walk."

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

It is really amusing, were it not so aggravating, to see the airs most men put on, each after his own different fashion, over the fact that they are the providers, and the women dependent upon them. After forcing womanhood to this abject position, from which the independence of her personality revolts, not only by custom and religion, but in a measure by law also, they crow over the fact of their lordly prerogative as though it were the most disinterested thing in creation.

Gentle reader, especially my country reader, have you ever noticed the fowls in your barn-yard? See the cock, when his scratching has been crowned with success and he finds a choice morsel, how he calls to the hens with his cozing cluck, and they flock around him to receive his bounty: all this is very nice, were it to end here; but alas! with true masculine egotism, as he turns away he publishes the fact in an exultant crow that forbids all modest people from admiring him as much as before.

Oh thou sleek and glossy cock of the human family! it is very kind of you to work day after day to feed and clothe that "good-for-nothing woman," who does nothing in return but *play* at housekeeping, cooking, sewing and washing too, perhaps; also make-believe mother, nurse and teacher to *your* children to fill up the odd moments. It is likewise very kind of you to give up your seat in the cars and coaches for her; to let her drink first at the fountain; and to raise your hat to her when you meet her in the street; for which irksome attentions she repays you only by the small consideration of the civilizing influence of her presence among you, and her gentle ministrations in the time of your sickness and trouble. All this is very kind, I say, but pray, kind sir, do not crow so loud about it, for turn to the barn-yard again and learn your lesson: just hear the eager, clucking tumult of the hens as they fly to receive the largess of their protector! Does it not seem to you that the fact of his generosity has been sufficiently proclaimed without the gratuity of his egotistical crow? Dear sir, as I said before, do not crow so loud; for alas! with your tumult you have not only drowned the notes of the gentle clucking at your side, but, outraged by your boasting, the disposition that prompted it has been well-nigh strangled at its birth.

In the days of our grandmothers the head end of the crowing hen might well be a subject of sure prophecy, since the prophet herself had condemned the unfortunate hen to the pot the moment she heard her crow; but oh! ye fowls of the human barn-yard! when ye set the example and the hens among you crow, ye dare not cast her horoscope so darkly in this enlightened age, since in that case all history would prove you false prophets. For, alas for your theory, the crowing hens among you are the very ones who have the best time while they live, and the most honor when they die. If their crowing is disagreeable to you then, there is but one way that I know of whereby you may safely hinder it—cluck to them, and they will cluck to you.

MOUSE-IN-THE-CORNER.

Result of Speculation.

Stubbs had been away from his native town a good many years. He returned with streaks of silver in his hair, deep furrows upon his brow, and a stoop in his shoulders. Upon the first favorable opportunity we called to see him, for he had been our schoolmate and playfellow in other times. We found him sitting by his table, in a thoughtful mood, with his right hand resting upon a large, well-worn pocket-book. Cordial greetings transpired, and anon he lapsed again into a reflective mood.

"Doesn't it seem good to get back to the old place once more?" we at length ventured.

"Yes," said he.

We had hoped he had done well during his absence. He looked up, and faintly smiled.

"All that I have gained," said he, "I shall leave to my favorite nephew and heir, and it will be valuable to him if he rightly uses it."

And he laid his hand again upon the old pocket-book.

"It is in there?" we suggested.

"It is all in this pocket-book," he nodded; "but," he added, "the key to the wealth I shall put upon the outside. I had just planned to write it as you came."

"A direction for its use?" was our supposition.

"A hint from which he might gain direction," said Stubbs. I shall fold this old book in an envelope, and upon the envelope I shall write this legend:

"'*The result of thirteen years' tireless wandering and speculation.*'"

"And the book contains—"

"Nothing!"

HELMBOLD REDIVIVUS.—In correction of various rumors in circulation detrimental to Dr. Helmbold, the latest being a report of a gunning accident at Long Branch, we are informed that the Doctor never was in better health and spirits. His prospects are bright, and ere long the great advertiser will shine more brilliantly than ever. With Helmbold, there is no such word as fail.—*N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.*

☞ George W. Childs, of the Philadelphia *Ledger*, occupies just now the attention of the English aristocracy. On the Fourth of July he spent the day with the Duke and Duchess of Buckingham, "excorted" on the Thames, and dined at Greenwich. He is to spend a week with his Grace and her Grace at Stowe. On the 5th, Mr. C. and party were dined by the Lord Mayor and lady, and about this time they are the guests of Mr. Walter, of the London *Times*, at his great estate of Bearwood. Mr. Walter and Mr. Childs have had warm personal relations for many years.

☞ An inconsiderate word, thoughtlessly spoken to the detriment of your neighbor's character, may tarnish his reputation for life.

ON SILVER WINGS.

BY THE AUTHOR of "Joyce Dormer's Story."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE THIN END OF THE WEDGE.

John Carteret remained for some minutes after Mrs. Seaton's departure as one stunned. The events of the day, the knowledge that had dawned upon him and had been corroborated by her words, the doubts and insinuations conveyed in her conversation, together with the haunting feeling that had been with him, more or less, since the time that he had first heard Jasper Seaton's name, produced a mental conflict that was anything but satisfactory.

He took Mrs. Seaton's last speech to pieces, and carefully considered each clause. To marry at once was utterly impossible: a poor curate who could only keep himself! How was it to be accomplished? He could only do so by taking advantage of the hint that Mrs. Seaton had given him, thereby becoming dependent upon the bounty of his rival. If, on the other hand, he did not marry now, he might never marry at all; since Mrs. Seaton had plainly spoken of the probability of Diana's forgetting her first love, and taking a second. And if she did so, might it not, after all, be wiser—as the world goes? What had he to offer in comparison with what Jasper had to bestow? On the one side, ease, wealth, freedom from care; on the other, hardship, struggles, forbearance, endurance, with nothing but his love to crown her life. And might not his rival's love be true as his own? How did he know? How could he judge?

And looking round the room, so full of luxury and beauty, he wondered if he had a right to ask her to step out of this fairy-land into the world of reality. His thoughts were growing bitter. Poor men must be content to live without love—love was only for the rich. There was a mistake in the reading of the curse that had come down to man: it did not lie in work, in hard labor; it lay rather in ill-payment for the work—in poverty. Poverty was the curse of man. The poor might lie down and die, and the rich step over their graves unheeding.

Diana had been a long time away. Surely, if she cared for him, she would have been back before now. She knew he was obliged to return to Linthorp the next day. Perhaps Mrs. Seaton's insinuation was not without a foundation, and the beginning of what he had to dread was coming: gratitude was unconsciously developing into a deeper feeling. Well, if it was, it must be so. He could bear it, if Diana were but happy.

He leaned his arms upon the table, and, resting his head upon them, fell into a reverie so deep that he did not hear the door open, nor knew that Diana had entered, until he felt a soft touch on his hand, and Diana whispered—

"Wake up, John!—wake up! Are you so tired?"

And then she drew a chair close up to the fire, and made him sit down, while she seated herself on a footstool beside him.

"I like low places," she said. "And now we can be in *Paradiso* for a time. Jasper is asleep, and all is quiet in the house. I have so much to say to you, and you must give me new strength to help me whilst you are away. I get so weak and helpless, John, now that you have gone."

Perchance she might be feeling her growing weakness, so reasoned John Carteret. And Diana went on, without waiting for an answer—

"To-day is Martinmas Day, John. I am glad you came on an especial day—it gives one a sort of date to any happiness; and then it seems to make a kind of link between the present and the old times past, and to make all the world belong to one another."

"St. Martin gave his cloak to a beggar—is not that the story?" said John Carteret, rather sharply.

"Yes," answered Diana, wondering at the tone of his voice.

"You think St. Martin would not be a bad patron saint for us to have, Di, as we are both poor?"

And he laughed—a light, scornful laugh, that sounded strangely unlike John Carteret.

"I don't think we want patron saints to help us, so long as our hearts are true."

"Perhaps not."

But the tone was unnatural. Diana looked up hastily. The firelight shining on John Carteret's face showed Diana the grave, anxious look that Mrs. Seaton had noticed, but which had, so far, escaped her observation. Then she began to wonder what Mrs. Seaton had been saying to him—certainly something that had annoyed him. And she remembered the particularly gracious manner in which Mrs. Seaton had sent her back to John Carteret; and now it darted into her mind that she must have been telling him all that Captain Stanfield had said.

John Carteret was mechanically twisting the long lock of yellow hair round his finger. Diana suddenly drew it away; and, placing her hand on his, she said—

"Has Mrs. Seaton been saying anything about Linthorp to you?"

"No. Why should she?"

"Oh, nothing. Only I thought she had been so long with you, that perhaps she might."

"I did not know that she knew anything about Linthorp, or Linthorp people."

"She does not."

"Then why in the world should she talk to me about Linthorp? Does she want to go there?"

"No."

"And she knows no one?"

"Except Lady Peckford—I had forgotten her."

"She did not inquire about Lady Peckford. But you must have some reason for thinking she would be likely to speak about Linthorp. What is it, Di?"

Diana did not answer. She wished she had not mentioned Linthorp. She wanted her few hours of *Paradiso* to be pleasant; and now she was hovering on the borders of annoyance herself.

"Do *you* know any one at Linthorp?" he asked.

"No—that is, not exactly."

"That is to say, yes. There is some person of whom you are thinking in connection with the place. Who is it?"

Diana felt relieved. She could perhaps extricate herself from her difficulty without betraying all that she wished to keep secret.

"Do you know a Captain Stanfield, John?"

"I may answer as you did—'not exactly;' but I have met him several times. What of him?"

"He has been here. He is an old friend of Dr. Crawford's."

"Is he?" replied John Carteret, without the least appearance of consciousness.

"Yes; and he was a friend of my father's, and he is my godfather. Isn't it very odd how people meet, John? I was very glad to find that I had a godfather, and had been baptized."

"Did any one doubt it, Di?"

"I do. I did not know anything about it; and I knew I was half a heathen when you came here."

"Poor little Di!"

It was more like his ordinary tone and manner; and Diana felt a sudden thawing of the ice-bound feeling that had come over her.

"Oh! John, that is just like yourself. I was afraid that the winter's was thinking of under the Marshwood Beeches was setting in. I was afraid I had done something to offend you, you seemed so grave when I came in, and so unlike yourself. John, I will not lose faith again—I ought not to have done so. I might have known, even if you did not write, that you had not forgotten me. But you will write oftener? I do not like the feeling of winter. I want to have the summer always with me, that I may be strong."

She spoke very earnestly; and John Carteret drew her nearer to him. Was she conscious that her faith might fail without his presence?

"Di," he said, "as long as you trust me, you have no cause to fear. Perfect love casts out all fear. Measure me by your own heart, and whatever answer your own heart gives, it will be the answer of mine also."

Then wherefore was he tormenting himself? And why did he not read aright the truth of the heart beside him? Because a whispering tongue had stepped in, and, with false shadows, had blurred the clear light. He could go on hoping and loving; but he must wait, and be prepared for what might happen.

And they sat talking; and Mrs. Seaton did not disturb them. Perhaps she knew that it was the last time they would sit there together, and she was willing to give them the grace of a long, last interview—something to think upon in days to come. For Mrs. Seaton had pondered over her plans as she sat by Jasper's bedside, and they were fuller of foresight and craft than might have been imagined. And as she watched her son's restless, fevered sleep, she resolved that this was the last visit that John Carteret should pay at the Manor House.

A noble nature is sometimes more credulous—more easy to be worked upon—than a baser one; and she knew that her arrows had struck deep; and with a little diplomacy, they might rankle as sorely as she could wish.

So Diana and John Carteret talked on—looking back, and looking forward, from Eden to Eden again; for the world unbloomed around them, fresh and fair as it ever had been, with a beauty that John Carteret's heart often reverted to in the days that were to come.

"Perhaps some nobleman, or some one who has a living to give away, will come to Linthorp and hear you preach: and then he will be sure to give it to you, John."

John Carteret smiled.

"If you could change hearts with him, Di, perhaps he might; but people have so many claimants for livings."

"Ah, but it need not be one that other people would care much about—quite a small one, far away in the country. You would like to live in the country, would you not? I wish these were the days of patrons, and then there would be some one to help you along, as people used to be helped—I mean as clever people used to be helped—Mr. Addison, for instance, and Dean Swift, and Steele. No, Steele did not care for patrons."

"I think I am of Steele's opinion. A man must get on of himself, if he is to get on to any purpose."

"But little helps on the way are very convenient. Those were nice old-fashioned times, John—the very dresses had something charming in them; and the way people used to speak of Mr. Pope, and Mr. Addison, and Sir Richard Steele—not as we do now of Tennyson, Scott, and Macaulay. There was something very pleasant in the reverent way people thought and spoke of men of talent. It is all different now. I don't think people are reverent enough."

"Why, Di, I should have said you were the last person in the world to think so."

"Perhaps it might seem so; and yet, for that very reason, I may feel it the more, and wish I was more reverent. But that will come with our summer-time, John; when I shall hear you preach every Sunday, and never grow tired—as I do sometimes now, with Dr. Crawford's sermons. But I don't get tired so often as I used to do. I can always find a little that I like. I am groping along, finding something of what I had a feeling there was to be known; but not so easily as if you were with me. But it will all come in time."

"Seed-time first, Di; then the harvest. First the flood, and the dove cannot find a resting-place; then the beautiful land, wherein she may dwell in peace."

"Yes, the flood is passing away. I seem to see the waves retreating farther and farther away," said Diana, dreamily.

She was leaning her head against John Carteret's shoulder, and feeling that she had reached the haven of safety.

"John," she exclaimed, suddenly, rousing up, "promise me that the first sermon you preach in your own church shall be on the verse that made me first realize that I had a soul; for, John, I scarcely more than half believed in it until I knew you."

"Which is your verse, Di?"

She folded her hands, and looking up in his face, repeated—

"'Oh, that I had wings like a dove?—for then would I fly away, and be at rest!'"

A sudden flush of flame lit up the tawny yellow hair, until it glittered like an aureole, and cast a brighter lustre into the dark eyes. She seemed to John Carteret like some loving saint—one whom he could almost worship; and bending down he kissed her.

All distrust passed away in that moment; and could Mrs. Seaton have seen into his heart, she would almost have despaired of accomplishing the work she had set herself.

CHAPTER XXVI.

ON DIFFERENT MISSIONS.

Perhaps Charles Stanfield had dwelt too much upon that parting blush of Diana's, and of her pleasantly expressed wish of seeing him again. But then, young men who have become enchanted for the first time are apt to build magnificent castles upon very slender foundations. Perhaps, also, he was a little premature in his arrival, since Diana had mentioned summer, and not early spring—so early, that it was scarcely to be called spring yet. Still, it had seemed to him that he had been an age away; though, now that he found himself actually where he had hoped for so long to be, it seemed but yesterday since he had seen Diana; and everything at the Rectory tended to further the illusion.

So little happened in Broadmead, and there were so few changes among the people, that Charles Stanfield found Dr. and Mrs. Crawford scarcely advanced two sentences in the conversation in which he had left them.

Jasper's accident had been the one event since then; and Charles Stanfield, turning his strategic talents from war to the more pleasant regions of love, made his inquiries after Mr. Seaton serve to bring him tidings of Diana.

Perhaps he heard rather more than he wished to hear; for Mrs. Crawford, primed by Mrs. Seaton's praises and insinuations, gave a graphic account of Diana's devotion, and the change that had been lately wrought in her.

"And one begins to be a little suspicious," said Mrs. Crawford, "when one hears of young ladies suddenly becoming extremely amiable, when they have been rather of the firebrand order. What do you think, Mr. Stanfield? Or are you above the speculations in which we village gossips are wont to speculate?"

"The world is a world of speculators," answered Charles Stanfield, vaguely.

"Yes; and if they don't go into railways, and stocks, or anything of that kind, they make capital of their neighbors' affairs; and a rise or fall therein produces as great an excitement in the gossip market as other transactions do on 'Change," said Dr. Crawford. "But really, my dear, I don't think you should exactly call Di unamiable. She had some odd, upsetting notions, that made her brusque, and too independent; and perhaps she was a little too defiant sometimes."

"Perhaps—ah, well!"

And Mrs. Crawford nodded her head significantly; whilst Charles Stanfield felt as though he were committing treason, in listening to anything against Diana.

"I'm going up to the Manor House," said Dr. Crawford. "Perhaps you will go with me. That was a bad accident of Jasper Seaton's—worse than the doctors thought. He'll have to go on crutches for some time yet. It's a terrible trial to a man of his temperament."

"And I suppose Miss Ellis objects to guns more than ever?"

"Very likely—though I have not heard her say so."

The sun had struggled through the clouds, and was sending bright hues across the landscape, and gilding the tender green of the budding branches. There was an air of promise in everything, though as yet it was so far from fulfillment, and there was an unsettled look about the skies as the sun went in and out behind the clouds; and after a burst of sunshine would come a little gust of wind, and the shadows grew darker, and moved unsteadily over the greening hedges, and the tiny buds seemed to vanish; and at one moment Charles Stanfield thought it a pleasant day, and the next he thought it was going to rain; and then a shower actually came, and after it a rainbow; and then the rainbow faded away, and the rain-drops glistered on the hedges.

Hopes and fears, lights and shadows, smiles and tears, the blossom and the fruit, the seed-time and the harvest, growth and decay, life and death, and then life again. Nature is the perpetual allegory, painting the life of man—the mother earth teaching to her children great lessons in a dumb voice.

Charles Stanfield was not heeding them; for his thoughts were centred on one small point in the great universe, that was so great to him that it obliterated for the moment all else beside. Nature had been comparatively unsuggestive to him, so far; but perhaps nature tells her story better after the revelation that deepens men's hearts to understand.

So it seemed in his case; and had Dr. Crawford been a man of more acute perceptions, he would have noticed that his companion had altered since they had last met; that the deep blue eyes had greater living depth in them, and that the soul had awakened to take a wider grasp of humanity, and that fortifications and lines of circumvallation were no longer paramount; but that the inner fortress of the man had been taken by surprise, and that he was unprepared with any strategic operation to recover it.

"I have not waited for the summer," were Charles Stanfield's first words to Diana. "I found town so very dreary, just as the winter was thawing away, that I was only too glad to avail myself of my father's business at Creighton to pay another visit to Broadmead."

"Broadmead is not looking its best just yet," returned Diana. "But a day or two makes a great difference at this season, and you must come again in the summer to see it at its perfection."

And the dark eyes looked up, and then looked down again, and the same perplexed blush came into her cheek that had been there the last time they met.

And that last time had come wonderfully near to Charles Stanfield during the last few minutes, and the blush was as flattering as it had been before.

"My father was so sorry not to be able to come down with me; but, as soon as his work is at an end, he intends to come down and make your acquaintance, as he feels he does not half know you."

"I have the advantage, then; for I feel that I know him thoroughly. He is one whom one involuntarily trusts and understands the moment he speaks. I hope he will like me as well as I like him."

"I am sure he will," said Charles Stanfield, wondering whether Diana extended the same gracious opinion to the son, and glancing down to see if could read anything in her face. But he found it impossible; and Dr. Crawford and Mrs. Seaton being engaged in conversation at the other end of the room, he thought he would try to find out in some other way what the chances might be in his favor.

"Do you remember your promise, Miss Ellis—or what I was bold enough to hope was one?"

Diana considered for a moment.

"No," she said. "What was it?"

"That you would show me some of the beauties of Broadmead when I came here again."

"Ah, yes,—I remember quite well; but—"

"But it is too soon?" he said.

"Not exactly. Broadmead is worth seeing at any time. I was thinking it would be pleasanter for you if Jasper had been able to go. But he cannot walk far, with his crutches."

"I shall be quite satisfied as it is," answered Charles Stanfield, "if you will indeed be so good as to be my guide. Is it not asking too much?"

"Oh, no," replied Diana. "I am glad to find any one who takes an interest in the place. But you must promise me that you will not be thinking of digging trenches, and all that sort of thing."

She spoke half gravely and half in jest.

"I promise it," said Charles Stanfield, smiling. "I think there is something in Broadmead air that makes one think less of such things. I have not been thinking so entirely of my military engineering lately, Miss Ellis."

"I wish you would not think of it at all," she answered, earnestly.

"Why not?"

"Because I hate war," returned Diana, with flashing eyes.

"That certainly would be a strong reason," replied Charles Stanfield, who was fast rousing up to Lady Peckford's waking point.

Diana looked up quickly.

"You must not laugh at me, Mr. Stanfield."

"I am quite serious, Miss Ellis," he began.

But Jasper entering at that moment, there was a diversion in the conversation, and Diana could only wonder whether Mr. Stanfield was really going to say that he had meant what he had said; and if so, why should her opinion make any difference?

She and Jasper had been having a conversation upon woman's influence, and she was surprised to find how great Jasper thought it might be; and she was inclined to think that perhaps Mr. Stanfield might take the same view. And as he had been out in the great world, of which she had seen nothing, he might have seen its workings more comprehensively than she had had an opportunity of doing. And so she mentally moralized and philosophized in one direction, whilst Mr. Stanfield was arriving at the same conclusion by quite a different path.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

ORANGE BLOSSOMS. Fresh and Faded. By T. S. ARTHUR. Published by J. M. Stoddard & Co., Philada. Everything that T. S. Arthur writes is good. This, as the author says, is a book of life-pictures. It takes you into other homes, and makes you familiar with other experiences than your own. It shows you where others have erred, what pain and loss have followed, and how love, self-denial, and reason have turned sorrow into joy, and threatened disaster into permanent safety. The book is beautifully gotten up, and is just suitable for a gift.

JOHN JERNINGHAM'S JOURNAL. Published by Charles Scribner & Co., New York; and also for sale by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada. More than a year ago Mrs. Jerningham put forth to the world the experiences of her early married life. Mr. Jerningham also kept a diary, and extracts therefrom are given in these pages.

LIGHT SCIENCE FOR LEISURE HOURS. A Series of Familiar Essays on Scientific Subjects, Natural Phenomena, etc. By Richard A. Proctor, B. A. Camb, F. R. A. S., author of "The Sun," "Other Worlds Than Ours," "Saturn," etc. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada. In these attractive Essays the most valuable scientific truths are presented in a light and readable form, clearly and simple, but with an exact adherence to the facts as the author sees them.

DOMBY AND SON. By CHARLES DICKENS. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

MY HEROINE. A Story. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York; and also for sale by Claxton, Remsen & Haffelfinger, Philada.

RESOURCES OF KANSAS. Fifteen Years Experience. By C. C. HUTCHINSON. With a new map and forty illustrations. Published by the author, Topeka, Kansas.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT; ITS OFFICERS, AND THEIR DUTY. By RANSOM H. GILLET. Published by Woolworth, Ainsworth & Co., 51, 53 and 55 John St., New York, and 111 State St., Chicago. Also for sale by the Central News Company, Philada.

THE LADY'S FRIEND. The steel plate in the September number is "The Haunted House," a very fine moonlight picture, exquisitely engraved. This is one of the few magazines in the country that give *steel* engravings—the expense being so great that even such magazines as Harper's, Scribner's and the Galaxy do not attempt it. The colored Fashion plate (also steel) is remarkably handsome. The music is that saddest of all sad songs—"The long, long, weary day," the words in English and in German; and, illustrating the sentiment of the music, "Will He Return to Her?" leads off the literary department. There is a rich variety of stories and poems; few magazines are quite equal to the Lady's Friend in this point. The serial by Amanda Douglas—"A Little Money," is in the best style of that popular author; and Miss Muzzey's continued story, "Jealousy," grows intensely interesting. The wood-cuts of desirable and seasonable patterns must be acceptable to the ladies; as also the designs for fancy work, and the general interest and information of the editorial department. Published by Deacon & Peterson, Philada.

THE JOURNAL OF THE FRANKLIN INSTITUTE. For August. Published by the Franklin Institute at their Hall, Philada.

THE HALF-YEARLY ABSTRACT OF THE MEDICAL SCIENCES. July, 1871. Published by Henry C. Lea.

APPLETON'S JOURNAL. Monthly Part for August. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York.

THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW for July. American Edition. This number is exceedingly rich in literary matter, among which we notice "The Poetry of Democracy: Walt Whitman," "Early English Literature," "The Government and the Liberal Party," etc. Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philada.

THE EDINBURGH REVIEW for July. American Edition. Contains interesting papers on "The Military Policy of Russia," and "Darwin on the Descent of Man," a criticism upon "Swinburne's Poems," etc. Published by the Leonard Scott Publishing Co., New York; and also for sale by W. B. Zieber, Philada.

LIPPINCOTT'S MAGAZINE. The September number contains "Scrambles Among the Alps," "Shall we Throw Physic to the Dogs," "Not Pretty but Precious," "Leonard Grimleigh's Story," &c. Published by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Philada.

SCRIBNER'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE. The September number contains "Pictures from Canada," "Meteator," "Whose Wife was She," "Mountain Views and Adventures," "The Songster," &c. Published by Scribner & Co., New York.

STREET SCENE.—"Please give me a penny—I want some bread," said a little beggar to a gentleman the other day, as he was passing on the street. The charitable gentleman gave the boy a 25-cent scrip. As he went his way, the professional alms-seeker was heard to call out to one of his cronies—"S-a-y, Jimmy, I've struck a flat! Let's get a stew!"

THE MARKETS.

FLOUR—3000 bbls sold at from $4.25@4.75 for superfine; $4.87½@5.25 for extra; $5.50@6.50 for Penna extra family; $6.00@7.00 for Northwest extra family; $6.00@7.25 for Ohio and Indiana family, and $7.50@9.00 ₱ bbl for fancy brands. Rye Flour sold at $4.25 ₱ bbl.

GRAIN—Wheat—50,000 bus sold at $1.38@1.40 for Western red; $1.38@1.40 for Penna red; $1.42@1.55 for Delaware red; $1.45@1.45 for Western amber. Rye—Sales of 2500 bus at 70@72c ₱ bus. Corn—Sales of 80,000 bus at 70@72c for yellow, and 71@72c ₱ bus for white. Oats—Sales of 100,000 bus at 40@41c for black mixed; 42@44c for white mixed, and 45@46c for white.

PROVISIONS—Sales of mess Pork at $12.75@14 ₱ bbl. City packed extra Mess Beef sells at $17@17.50 ₱ bbl. Beef Hams, $28@29. Bacon—Sales of sugar cured city smoked hams at 14@15½c; sides at 8½@9½c, and shoulders at 7c. Green Meats—Sales of pickled hams at 12@13c; and shoulders, in salt, at 5½c. Lard—Sales at 9½@9½c for city and Western steam and kettle rendered. Cheese—Sales of New York factory at 8@10½c. Butter—Sales of roll 18@27c, and packed at 12@14c. Eggs sell at 20@21c; Western at 18@19c ₱ dozen.

COTTON—900 bales of middling upland sold at 18½@19½c, and 19½@19½c for New Orleans.

BARK—No. 1 Quercitron sold at $25 ₱ ton. Tanners' Bark at $11@12 ₱ cord for Chestnut.

BEESWAX sells at 37c ₱ lb for yellow.

FRUIT—Dried Apples sell at 5½@7½c. Green Peaches sell at 50c@$1 ₱ basket, and Green Apples at $2@5 ₱ bbl.

HOPS—Sales of prime at 20@25c.

IRON—Pig Iron—Sales of 500 tons No. 1 foundry at $27, and No. 2 at $25 ₱ ton. Bar Iron sells at $77@80. Scotch Pig commands $22@24 ₱ ton.

SEEDS—Clover sells at 10@10½c. Timothy at $2.25@2.75. Flaxseed sells at $1.95.

PHILADELPHIA CATTLE MARKET.

The supply of Beef Cattle during the past week amounted to about 2290 head. The prices realized from 7@7½ cents ₱ lb. 250 Cows brought from $40 to $80 ₱ head. Sheep—30,000 head were disposed of at from 5@6c ₱ lb. 2500 Hogs sold at from 7½ to 7½c ₱ lb.

R. R. R.

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Exuberant Health

Is a blessing vouchsafed to few. Even those who have been favored by nature with strong constitutions and vigorous frames are apt to neglect the precautions necessary to preserve these precious endowments. Indeed, as a rule, the more healthy and robust a man is, the more liberties he is inclined to take with his own physique. It is some consolation to the naturally weak and feeble to know that they can be so invigorated and built up, by a proper use of the means which science has placed at their disposal, as to have a much better chance of long life, and exemptions from disease and pain, than the most athletic of their fellows who are foolish enough to suppose themselves invulnerable, and act accordingly.

It is not too much to say that more than half the people of the civilized world need an occasional tonic, to enable them to support the strain upon their bodies and minds, which the fast life of this restless age occasions. In fact, a pure, wholesome, unexciting tonic is the grand desideratum of the busy millions, and they have the article in HOSTETTER'S STOMACH BITTERS. It is a staminal medicine, i. e. it imparts permanent strength to weak systems and invigorates delicate constitutions. Its reputation and its sales have steadily increased. Competitive preparations have been introduced *ad libitum*, and, as far as the public is concerned, *ad nauseam*, in the hope of rivalling it; but they have all either perished in the attempt or been left far in the rear. It has been the great medical success of the present century, and it is quite certain that no proprietary medicine in this country is as widely known, or as generally used.

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Important to the Ladies.

It is said that ladies who are troubled by pimples, sallowness, moth-patches, ring marks, &c., may obliterate the evidences of their mortification, and add immensely to their personal beauty, by the use of an article now being sold by our Druggists, known as MAGNOLIA BALM. We should think such a thing would be very popular. au19-1m

Interesting to Ladies.

I have had the Grover & Baker Machine in constant use for the last *ten years*, and have never known it to rip or do poor work. It is simple, easily worked, and can be managed by any child.

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191 State st., Chicago.

Rose Cold and Hay Fever disappear by the use of Jones Whitcomb's Asthma Remedy.

ELLINOR.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY T. J. CHAMBERS.

Her eyes are blue as the violets
That bloom in the month of May,
And her cheeks as red as the western skies
At the close of a summer's day.
Her brown hair clusters around a brow
That is white as the winter's snow.
Her dainty hand is small as a child's,
And her heart is as pure, I know.

Her voice is sweet as a thrush's song
On a sunny morn in June,
As she trips about at her household tasks,
Humming a tender tune.
The song she sings is a sweet love-song,
And it thrills my listening ear—
"Oh, take me to your arms, my love!"
But she doesn't think I'm near!

Last even we wandered adown the vale,
While the whippoorwill sang in the wood;
And I breathed in her ear a tender tale
That is easily understood.
"My darling," I said, "will you promise to come,
My life forever to bless?"
And she placed her little white hand in mine,
And tremblingly answered "Yes."

I kissed her lips, while the moon looked down
From the peaceful summer sky;
The whippoorwill hushed its noisy notes,
And the wind went past with a sigh.
While back and forth 'neath the towering trees
Of maple, and oak, and fir,
I walked with the peerless girl of my choice—
My beautiful Ellinor.

PRACTICAL NOTES
FOR
FUTURE CALIFORNIA TOURISTS.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY A LADY.

No. 4

Bidding adieu to the Mormon city as another beautiful sunset tinted mountain, valley and lake, we returned to Ogden, and from there took the Central Pacific road for San Francisco. During this ride you cross the great American desert, the extent of which you cannot fully appreciate until you pass over it in person. It is a perfect sea of white alkali, burning hot under the sun's rays. We closed our eyes for the night upon it to wake the next morning and find no change of scene—save the snowy peaks of the Humbolt range in the distance. All day long we rode on without seeing a shrub over three feet high, or living thing except a few little birds, two poor crows, and one wild duck. It is a long, long, dreary ride.

Like many other experiences in life, where happy moments do much to efface the memory of dreary ones, we were repaid for the tedious ride when on waking the next morning, we found ourselves near the summit of the Sierra Nevada. The sun rose from the mountain in a perfect glory of brightness; all nature was beautiful. At five o'clock we were ready to enter the observation car. How the practical necessities of life constantly array themselves in antagonism with sentiment. Here on the mountains, nature rich in beauty, our eyes craving the feast after the long fast, are we annoyed by the snow-sheds that interfere with the finest views, just as a covered bridge shuts out the view of the prettiest rivers. The winter traveller gladly welcomes their protection, but to summer tourists they are a great annoyance, as they roof in the road at some places for several miles. The grandest scene on the route is at Cape Horn. The guide-book tells us—"At this point timid ladies, shuddering, draw back; one look being sufficient to unsettle their nerves." Either there were no "timid ladies" on board our train, or the usual effect failed to be produced, for all eagerly gazed into the "awful chasm" where 2,500 feet below us wound a river like a silver thread, while the crests of the mountains towering high above threw their shadows over the beautiful valley.

Those of my readers who have crossed the ocean, will be reminded of the preparations for entering port, as they approach their journey's end. The porter of the cars becomes generally active, and especially interested in your appearance. With every flourish of his hand when removing dust, he seems to anticipate an extra "bit," as they call twenty-five cents. We were advised to keep some warm wrappings convenient, for we would require them on the boat when crossing the bay. We could scarcely realize it, as we had been waiting daily for the cool breeze that we had not found up to this time. But once on board, and we realized the comfort of folding them about us. The wind blew a perfect gale, and was as cold as though from off an iceberg.

There was the usual consultations among the passengers in regard to hotels. We decided on going to "The Grand," and it proved a most agreeable decision. It equals in every respect the finest hotels at home or abroad. Our suite of rooms was prettily furnished, and after ordering a *fire* in our parlor, and making ourselves presentable, we were ready to receive friends in a cozy, home-like manner. Looking on the busy world outside, we could but marvel at the appearance of this city of only twenty years growth. It is one more proof of American industry, perseverance, and general go-a-head-itiveness.

Upon a better acquaintance with the famed city which those residing here call "Frisco," I was astonished at its size and business appearance. The atmosphere is also a surprise. I soon decided why they abbreviated the name, for the utterly regardless manner in which the winds *frisk* you about is enough to suggest it. The variety of dress is quite striking as you promenade. You will notice one lady with deep fur cape, while at her side passes another with lace shawl, thin velvet sacque, and again a white dress with some gauze-like covering over the shoulders. Taste alone must regulate them; it surely cannot be comfort. The winds were not disagreeable to me, but I preferred to dress myself suitable to meet them. Though the weather was like November at home, the fruits and flowers grew luxuriantly. The florists cut their plants very lavishly, cutting small buds with those more fully blown, and giving as many as I could carry in both hands for twenty-five cents. Such sweet moss-roses, and so many varieties of carnation pinks. In one bouquet I counted twelve different varieties. My room was a garden of beauty. Thanks be to those who, knowing my love for flowers, kept me so bountifully supplied. In the size of fruit and vegetables, I was disappointed. On visiting the markets, we saw some large, fine specimens of both; but I told them I wanted to see such as I read of. They could not show them to me any larger than those often exhibited at our fairs; the difference being ours are the exception, those there the usual growth.

The principal drive from the city is to the Seal Rocks, and the most pleasant time for the going is in the early part of the day, before eleven o'clock. The winds are not then so high. You take a carriage, go out to the Cliff House to breakfast, driving over a good road, and returning by the beach. The hotel is situated on the rocks, close by the sea. From its piazza you look over the broad Pacific. Though this was my first view of it, I seemed to welcome it as an old friend, so much did its waves dash against the rocks and roll on the sandy beach like its sister ocean Atlantic; realizing the difference only as standing on its shore you bid good-night to old "Sol" as he sinks to rest, to receive his morning greeting as he rises from his ocean bed on the morrow from the broad Atlantic.

While breakfast is being prepared, you hear distant howlings, such a peculiar sound, coming from some rocks in the distance. Then upon looking carefully, you see a vast number of seals, sunning themselves. Soon they grow restless, and they push and crowd each other off. One after another goes plunging into the ocean, while others are making vigorous efforts to procure comfortable quarters on the rocks. It is very amusing to see them. Many of them have been named after noted persons, and all are protected by the laws of the state from capture, though several persons have been permitted to catch some for exhibition in distant cities. It is very evident that this spot is a pride to the city, as our parks are to us, for the first question is, "Have you seen the seals?" It is well to be prepared to answer in the affirmative, by making this visit among the first.

I, however, acknowledge a weakness for Chinamen, and felt greater interest in them and their peculiar life, than in some other matters of general interest. A gentleman friend kindly volunteered to pioneer us through "China town," as they call that portion of the city, and knowing him to have been one of the pioneers of the new state, felt he was well fitted to provide us entertainment. I will, however, leave the result of our visit till my next, that I may not weary you.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

PRINCE
TCHERKASKY'S MASQUERADE.

One touch of the golden wand of an April sunbeam and the enchanter spring had driven winter out of Russia. The ice on the Neva had at last broken from the banks, and was floating in great crystal rafts down towards Cronstadt.

I had been only a week in St. Petersburg, and I had still three months before me even if my business would then allow me to depart. I knew barely any one yet in the Russian capital but a Prince Tcherkasky, who was just now away at Moscow, and I began to find it dull. To wander among thousands of persons speaking a language unknown to you makes you feel like a deaf man at a theatre. I went to the bank to draw £2,000, dined, and was walking up and down a passage—one of those covered arcades leading out of the great street of St. Petersburg, the Nevskoi Prospekt—smoking a cigar and whiling away the time before the opera began, by studying in the shop-windows the last French and German caricatures and some photographs of Chinese and Circassian life which had just come out. All at once, as I turned on my heel, I saw a young officer in the uniform of an Austrian regiment, white and blue, look hard at me as he passed. His face was English I felt sure, but it was rather the intense sadness of it that made me look at it a second time. The next time he passed me he stopped, and in the Russian manner asked me politely in French to permit him to take a light from my cigar.

"You are surely a countryman of my own," I said.

"I am," was his reply. "And I was sure you must be English, but you see foreigners attract no attention here, we are all so cosmopolitan."

We were just then passing a cafe, and so agreed to go in there and have a talk.

"If you would like," he said, "to accept a stranger's invitation, I would ask you to come to my club on the Fontanka. It is more private there, and as you say you are new here you may like to see our club life.

I thanked him and willingly assented. He stopped at the first drosshky-stand and gave the usual shout. "Davai—ishvoshtshik." Half-a-dozen drivers instantly ran up to us.

"Don't take that three-legged monster," one cried; "he'll stick in the mud; besides, that man with the gray beard has had too much vodka. He'll take you for two roubles and pick your pocket afterwards."

My new friend soon selected a man from among these wrangling applicants, and away we went.

"Nitshevoss never fear, sir," said the man who dashed off with us. "My little white pigeon knows the way. Yukh, yukh; my little pigeon will carry you till to-morrow if you like. Have a care there, old woman, or I shall drive over you. Houp!" and away we flew.

"Good-natured fellows," said my friend; "and yet not many years ago a Russian here always used to beat a driver when he wanted to go faster."

"The old ways must take time to thaw," I said.

"What a climate," said my friend, with an eagerness to talk that seemed to me almost forced, for his eyes, I observed, were lifeless, and his face was sallow, and worn. "A German was telling me to-day, that early in last December he threw a piece of apple peel out of his window at Moscow; it froze to the ledge of the window and remained there till a thaw in February. That was nine weeks uninterrmitting frost. This winter has been peculiarly hard."

"There must be something strange and romantic about a winter here."

The young officer gave a sigh.

"Strange! I rather think it is. I've spent a winter here—such a winter! First one steamers stop, and one feels cut off from the sea, and hope that way; then comes the men to look to the great white stoves, and put up the double doors and windows. At 20 degrees below zero every one begins to get anxious. At 33, officers are sent round day and night to see that the sentinels and policemen do not sleep, for to sleep would be to die. At 25, all the theatres are closed, for fear the actors might be frozen on the draughty stage, or the coachmen waiting outside found dead on their boxes. At 28, ugh! all the sentinels have fur cloaks given them, and no one goes out but officers and business men."

"Delightful but sepulchral," I exclaimed. "You must all feel like released schoolboys now."

"Yes, we do; that makes us all in such high spirits," exclaimed my companion, as he got up and shouted to the driver, "The second large house by the Romanoff bridge."

The driver turned round with a peculiar look of intelligence, and uttered his usual exclamation of "Nitshevoss, never fear, sir."

"That man is drunk," said the officer; "but he'd go on till he dropped off the box. It is the way of these fellows."

It is twenty years ago since that evening, but still I remember as vividly as if it was a picture of Canaletti, that house as we drove along the Fontanka, and dashing over a bridge, drew up at the door of a brightly-illuminated house. It was a huge palace of a place rising in that Venetian part of St. Petersburg, and its lighted windows cast golden serpentine glimmers on the dark waters of the canal. The neighboring houses were dark and silent, but from the one which we were about to enter there broke occasional shouts of laughter, and I heard a curious whirring sound that was unknown to me.

"What noise is that?" I said, to my companion, stopping with one foot on the first step of the entrance to listen.

"Oh, that is from one of our card-rooms," he said, carelessly. "Some of these rich Russian officers are fond of roulette, and like to play at it here among themselves better than at a public table."

He said this in a frank and ingenuous way, turning with a slight smile as we entered the hall to remark on the difference of English and Russian clubs.

"Is the baron here to-night?" he asked of one of the numerous footmen in the hall.

"Yes, monsieur."

"Colonel Toganoff?"

"Yes, sir, just come."

"MM. Resnaux and Carrefoix?"

"Yes, sir, they're both in the card-room."

I was struck with the young officer's melancholy expression of face more and more as we sat together in a large empty smoking-room on the first floor above the apartment in which I could hear the whirr of the roulette and the wrangling clamor of excited players. His eyes were blank and lifeless as he answered my questions in an abstracted way.

"You are thinking of England," I said; "is it long since you were there?"

"I must apologize," he said; "yes, I was rather wandering for a moment. They are slow here, to night; will they never bring the coffee?—Yes, in the June of last year I was in England."

There were folding-doors at the end of the room where we sat. When we entered I noticed through the keyhole that the room beyond was dark, yet only a few minutes afterwards it was lighted up and some persons entered and began to play at cards. There was a whi-pering, then the doors were flung open, and a little portly, smiling, red-faced man, with a close-cropped white head and spectacles, entered our room and advanced toward us.

"Ha, Courtney," said the baron (who was not unlike Cavour) in French, with a slight Germanaccent, "how are you? Introduce me to your friend; we want you to cut in here—perhaps your friend will take a hand at whist. I never play, as you know, till a certain regulated time after dinner. What is life without digestion, my boy. I say now, just as I used to say, what is life without love? But ever since that beautiful Livonian princess jilted me and married the old Hungarian duke I have sought my only consolation in the science of gastronomy. Our chief here will not desert me as my mistress did; no, no."

The baron was very bland, pleasant, and genial, but I thought my new friend's manner to him somewhat cold as he mechanically laughed and replied, "No, he knows his best friends too well—would you like a game of whist," he added, turning to me; "I see they are just beginning. I'll stay out, or go down for half an hour and watch the roulette. You'll find them nice fellows here, but keen players."

I consented with pleasure, and at once sat down. I and M. Resnaux played M. Carrefoix and Colonel Toganoff. I did not somehow altogether like the men, rattling and hearty as they were, yet I hardly knew why. Resnaux was a tall, thin, keen-featured man, who looked like a lawyer; he had a brown complexion, compressed eyes, thin pinched lips, and a sardonic Voltarian smile. He approved of my playing, and manifested entire confidence in the result. The colonel, a stout man about sixty, with drooping white moustache, and a manner full of boisterous bonhommie, was the perfect old militaire, frank, cordial, careless, rudely gay and sociable. M. Carrefoix was an old, bearded man, very silent, rather deaf and morose, caring for nothing but the game, and, as I soon found, intensely active to all its vicissitudes, though apparently almost sunk into imbecility.

"Extraordinary hand I had, extraordinary, ha, ha!" said the Colonel, at the close of the first game. "M. Carrefoix, it will take us all we can do, I see, to beat them. but why did you lead spades, mon vieux brave? But there, I must not say anything, I dare say I made a blunder or two."

"You'd play a fair game if you would not talk so much," said the old man, preparing to deal. "Observe how quick this Englishman is—how careful! Sir," he said, turning to me, "you will be in time a first-rate player."

The second game was for a larger sum. Monsieur Resnaux and I were again partners. I was rich; I did not very much care even if I lost, the more especially as we had won the first rubber, and I felt by no means inferior in skill to my opponents. Again we won. Again we played for higher points; and this time I and M. Carrefoix were partners. Before we began, the Colonel called for Champagne; the Baron applauding the thought as worthy of a great military genius. He was evidently the acknowledged humorist of the party. One glass each, no more, and two for the bystanders. I was at home with them all by this time. The Colonel shook my hand on the conclusion of the game, even although he again lost. M. Carrefoix smiled grim approval. M. Resnaux gave me a keen look, and nodded to me as we touched glasses. The Baron patted my shoulder, chuckled himself hoarse when I won the odd trick, and derided his companions on the stranger's skill.

"M. Carrefoix, condescended to praise the stranger's play. M. Carrefoix, you are an impostor! The English game is superior to ours. Resnaux, you're clearing them out—positively clearing out the Rothschild of St. Petersburg! M. Carrefoix, shall I send home for some rouloux for you?—but, ah! you've got your check-book, and you'll need it; you'll need it, my friend."

I saw the bottle of champagne uncorked and every glass filled, yet I'm sure that these clever rogues, somehow or other, drugged my wine; for almost instantly that I drank it, I felt a strange effervescence and lightness in my brain, that seemed to change the character of every object and to alter the whole current of my thoughts. I was conscious that I was talking more and faster than before, and I seemed to see the whole mystery of the game with supernatural clearness. We were winning when, all at once, my partner returned a wrong card. He grumbled some malediction on himself, for that card lost us the game.

I told him so.

"You tell me how to play at whist!" he said, effervescingly—"a man of my age! I tell you it was your absurd hurry to get out your five tramps. It nearly lost you the last game, only you saved it by a blunder of Toganoff. You have held good cards, but if you had not, mon Dieu! things would have been different long ago."

"Come, we've had enough of whist," said the Colonel, "when we get to recriminations. Always bear a defeat patiently. M. Carrefoix, come let us try some bets on the dice. Monsieur Anglais, some more champagne?—yes, you must."

They brought the dice. I won the first ten minutes, then lost slightly—then won. All at once, as I turned to the great white mantel-piece for a lighted cigarette I had left there, I happened to look up in the glass and saw the Colonel, with a wink at the other three men, pull some dice from his waistcoat pocket, and change them for those on the table.

"Allons," he said, as I turned, "some more wine for our English friend."

"No," I said, "I thank you. One must keep clear in the head to study chances well. But there is no luck in these dice, curse them!"

As I said this, I took one, threw it under my foot, and crushed it with my heel. It was full of quick-silver. I saw the enemies' faces change. The Colonel blustered, the old man looked like a viper, the Baron glared, Resnaux turned white with rage.

"This is an insult—do you know that?" said the bully of the gang, the Colonel, foaming up. "We must meet again about this."

"I never fight with swindlers," I said, standing on the defensive.

"There is some mistake," said the Baron, "my dear sir, let me—." He advanced towards me to shake hands. As I held out mine, the treacherous rascal seized it, and in a moment threw his whole weight upon me. The rest crowded on—even the old man clung to my legs and urged me backward towards a narrow door I had not hitherto noticed, at the end of the apartment. Resnaux, before I could resist, gagged me with a handkerchief, the Colonel pinioned my arms, the old man held my feet, and the Baron helped to jostle me violently forward to what seemed a small dim bath-room; the bath was full of steaming water, the floor strewn with towels. I could not scream; I fought and struggled, but even though I once got them all down in a heap, I could not release myself from the gag. Were they going to murder me, to drown me, or to suffocate me? I tried to beat on the floor with my feet, to rouse some of the gamblers in the noisy room below, but the carpet was so thick and soft, that my feet made no sound that could rise above that clamor. The rapidity with which at once, without talking, they had fallen on me to drag me to the bath-room, inspired in me a horrible suspicion of previous crimes. They had exchanged no remarks except one, when the Baron said,

"Strip him—I think he is stunned. He has got the two thousand pounds in his right-hand breast-pocket. Courtney saw him put it there."

I had shut my eyes and was remaining quiet preparing for a last desperate effort; they thought I was insensible. I felt their clutch relax as they laid me on a sofa and their four hands simultaneously rummaged my four pockets. That moment I scrambled to my feet, kicking down the Baron and felling the old man. In a moment I tore away with supernatural strength the bandage round my knees, broke loose from that which bound my arms, and drove the Colonel backwards with a tremendous crash against the door of that dreadful room. At that moment as I stood there at bay, my hair dishevelled, my eyes glaring, my hands eager for their throats, a penknife, my only weapon, drawn in my right hand—facing Resnaux, who, lithe and swift, had pulled out a stiletto and was ready to spring on me when he could find an opening—suddenly the door at the further end of the room opened and Courtney, the young officer, ran towards me.

"No, you must do him no harm!" he said, throwing himself before me. "We may be bad enough, but there shall be no more murder here. He has done you no harm. It was I brought him here. Raise a finger against him and I will denounce you all!"

"You will, will you?—you dare, rascal!—beggar!" said the Baron. "Remember who you are."

"I was sure you would stand by me," I said to Courtney, "if you once knew that these men were thieves and murderers—they want to murder me. Help me, help! and quick, in God's name!"

Resnaux tried to rush at me, but Courtney caught him by the arm and struck the stiletto from him.

"You mistake us. Do you know who this gallant protector of yours is, Monsieur Englishman?" sneered the old man. "No? then I will tell you—he is a poor wretched vagabond whom we clothe in disguises and pay to allure rich foreigners like you, and fools from the country, to our gambling rooms. He is our tout and decoy—a brave, honest, noble, young Englishman, is he not? Ugh! he'll suffer for this, and his little wife's dinner will run short for a day or two, eh, Colonel? He'll smart for it, eh, M. Resnaux? I rather think myself he will. Curse him! if he was only my serf, I'd throw away two hundred roubles to get him knouted for this—that would tan his white skin and finish taming him."

"This is not true, Mr. Courtney?"—I turned to him.

Courtney hung his head and was silent.

"I am your slave and drudge," he said to them, after a moment's silence, "and I obey you; but this countrymen of mine, who followed me here so trustfully, I tell you, shall not be injured. I'm dangerous just now—come near me, one of you, and I might use a knife dangerously. After all, Siberia is not much worse than this life."

"Take your miserable money," I said, throwing a handful of napoleons down upon the floor: scramble for it—I will not take away what has been perhaps stolen from honest people."

"You are too hard upon us—you entirely mistake us," blandly said the Baron rubbing his hands.

"We must have satisfaction for this insult," foamed the Colonel.

"Curse him! let him go," muttered the old man; "it's lucky for the fool."

"Give me a knife some one, and I'll cut one of his arms off," said Resnaux.

But the gang gave way as we resolutely advanced, and they left the door open for our retreat.

Another minute, I was out in the street, breathing freer—saved, by God's mercy, from that imminent danger. Courtney pressed my hand warmly, and without a word turned and sprang up the steps leading to that den of thieves.

* * * * * *

Three days later, as I was coming out of my hotel, a beggar, wrapped in the dirtiest of sheep-skin coats, touched me on the arm. A waiter had just pointed me out to him. He handed me a letter. It was from Courtney, adjuring me to follow the bearer, who would bring me to his lodgings, on a matter of life and death: it was not safe for him to venture out. I followed the man with entire confidence through many dark, dirty streets in the poorest part of St. Petersburg, and clambered at last four stories above a tailor's shop. I knocked at the door; a very mournful, ladylike woman, whose dress bespoke great poverty, opened the door. It was Courtney's wife. Courtney was there, no longer in uniform, but dressed in rags, with neglected hair, his face buried in his hands, the image of profound despair.

He at once told me his story. He was the younger son of a country gentleman in ——shire. On his way home from India, on sick leave, he had fallen in love with an English girl whom he had met at Malta, and had run away with her to Alexandria, where they had married. Selling his commission, he had then gone into business, and had come out to St. Petersburg to purchase land for a cannon foundry; but his partner had cheated him and fled to America with nearly all the money collected to buy the property. Almost in despair at this cruel blow, he yielded to temptation and gambled with his last hundred pounds. There, after some transient successes, he had gradually fallen lower and lower into the power of the wretches from whom he had saved me. They had entangled him in debt till he was literally their slave. The very clothes I had seen him in were only given him after dark, when he had to assume the odious character of decoy.

"Oh, save me!" he said, hiding his face with his thin bony hands, "from this life of degradation—from this living death—from this misery into which I have dragged one I love dearer than myself! Help me to fly to England, and avoid the hundred forms of death with which these men have surrounded me! Their spies watch me everywhere: they may even have seen you come here!" As he uttered these words he threw himself abjectly at my feet, as if his whole nature was degraded to that of the most hopeless and debased of slaves.

I reproached him for a despair that was unworthy of an Englishman, and promised my aid.

"Don't reproach him," said his wife; "he has had scarcely any food since you saw him; and hunger takes away the bravest man's courage. You will save us from this horrible sentence? John has fallen, but oh! how he has suffered."

As she said this, the unhappy woman—already aged with trouble—fell on her knees beside her husband and seized my hand. I raised her and tried to comfort her.

"I dare say," she said, "it seems to you that we are hopelessly degraded, and fallen indeed, to bend so abjectly under these sorrows; but we are alone here, surrounded by enemies, in a foreign country; and your visit has been the only glimpse of sunshine we have yet seen. Ah! your words seem words of comfort from heaven."

"I am acquainted with a Prince Tcherkasky, a kind, generous fellow," I said, "to whom I have letters of recommendation; he is nephew of the Minister of Police. I will interest him in the safety of your husband, and will advance money to send you both to England by the Hull steamer, that starts for England to-morrow morning at seven o'clock. We will supply you both with money and clothes fitting your station, and we will take care that the police agents guard you safely to the vessel."

It did my heart good to see the light return to the eyes of the unhappy husband and his young wife, as they loaded me with thanks and prayed Heaven to bless me a thousand-fold for all I was about to do.

I sat down at the broken table in that miserable room, and had taken out my pocket-book to count out the money required for their passage and outfit, when there came a gentle, measured tap at the door. Courtney and his wife started and turned pale as death. I saw his hand tremble as he went and turned the handle to admit the visitor. His wife sunk into a chair.

It was the baron, sleek, calm, bland, and smiling as ever. His portly form was compressed in an immaculately fitting frock-coat. He rubbed his hands and eyed us paternally through his beaming spectacles.

"A charming group indeed, and after the antique," he said, in the most perfectly-pronounced French. "Benevolence comforting Poverty and Despair. As I expected, the English monsieur is advancing money to help his two amiable proteges to escape his too credulous creditors. Just so. Eh bien! all I say is Benevolence must sadly need proteges to look for them among people like this."

"I warn you," I said, my blood heated at the coolness of the heartless scoundrel, "not to interfere in this matter."

"Oh! we have quite done with the poor devil, believe me, my dear monsieur," replied the baron. "He has served our turn; but let me as a friend, in spite of that slight misunderstanding of yesterday"—(this slight misunderstanding was the attempt to murder me)—"warn you not to trust that misguided young man with money, for such is his insatiable tendency to gamble, he is sure to lose it all in two hours."

"Wretch!" gasped Courtney, "it was you lured me to all my misery."

"But let me tell you one thing," said the baron, "that if your protege does not leave St. Petersburg within three days from this time it will be bad for his health; voila. I will no longer intrude on so pleasant a family circle. Good-day, Monsieur Englishman. But one hour after midnight of the third day and he will meet with disagreeables, mind."

We breathed freer when the door closed on that detestable man.

"That," said Courtney, "is the chief of the gang that ruined and enslaved me. Smooth and oily as he seems, he is one of the most crafty, rapacious, and unrelenting of men. Carrefoix is the money-lender, the Colonel the blusterer to frighten timid men, Reenaux the duellist to fight the resolute." Though cardsharpers and swindlers, they had never before, he assured me, to his knowledge, attempted any more desperate crime, but in my case he suspected a pre-arranged plot, which they had of course kept secret from him.

* * * * * * *

I had seen the poor fellow and his wife on board the English steamer that started early in the morning, and was on my way to a masquerade at Prince Toberkasky's. It was nearly one o'clock A. M. when I got there. It was a picturesque scene in the courtyard of the palace, where (the nights being still cold) a huge fire was blazing for the coachmen and servants to warm themselves. Colored by the crimson light, maskers in the costumes of all ages and countries were passing up the great steps—shepherds and queens, knights and jesters, Francis the First courtiers and nuns, Tartar chiefs and Grecian goddesses, cavaliers and hermits, ancient Greeks and Venetian ladies, harlequins and abbots, Pierrots and duennas. Every moment from fresh carriages poured fresh clusters of anomalous personages, all laughing and chattering in a dozen different languages, while from within the palace came the clash and clang of music.

The prince and princess greeted me as I entered, congratulating me on the entire success of my plan for saving the poor young Englishman.

In the interval between the first and second dance I was introduced by Toberkasky to his uncle, the Minister of Police, a very grim, sardonic, and Rhadamanthine personage in antique uniform, who seemed to regard the whole world with suspicion and me with considerable distrust.

"How do you like our cracked column and the room where Peter the Great was murdered—the chief sights of our capital?" were his first words to me. This sarcasm was a rash one I myself had made to a friend only two days after landing.

I turned off the observation by telling the keen-eared minister the story of the gambling club.

"I have long had my eye on it," he said, "it belongs to a gang with branches in all the great European capitals. They change about, and it is hard to fix one's claws on them. It is well that young man left, and you, monsieur, too, had a narrow escape."

I quite agreed with him. I was resting after a dance, chatting to the Princess Toberkasky, when the arrival of some singular masks produced a sensation in the room. A richly-gilt palanquin, hung with crimson Chinese silk, entered, borne by four mandarins. They wore robes of flounced silk, and paced with great gravity, the peacock-feathers in their oddly-shaped caps nodding as they walked. They did not utter a word, but setting down the palanquin in the corner of the ball-room, stood by it, first drawing aside the silk curtains that hid their master. The occupier of the palanquin, who wore a mask, and was dressed as a Chinese emperor, sat there propped up with cloth-of-gold cushions, perfectly unmoved by all that passed around him. The Chinese masqueraders were soon forgotten, and the dancing went on. To our surprise, at the end of the fourth dance, the palanquin was still there, but the bearers were gone. The dancers began to crowd round the palanquin to interrogate the mute and imperturbable emperor, to tease him with banter, or to prevail on him to dance. As we crowded some one stumbled forward against the palanquin. To my horror the silent Chinese figure inside it fell motionless upon its side and remained there. I sprang forward and lifted it—it was a corpse!

I tore off the mask, and saw to my indescribable horror a face that I at once recognized as Courtney's. However they had killed him he had died calmly. Unhappy man! he must have returned to shore after midnight, and after I left been decoyed by spies in waiting to some gambling-house, and there murdered. From the unhappy wife I afterwards ascertained that the supposed murderers had handed him a letter as if from me, and written in a handwriting resembling mine. The bringing the body to the ball must have been a pre-arranged plan to mock me in sight of the Minister of Police.

There was a terrible scene of consternation when the fact became partially known, but, the palanquin and body being removed, the dancing was renewed. The matter was hushed up as much as possible, and the waves of gaiety soon closed over the horror. Neither the Baron nor his confederates were ever again seen in St. Petersburg, nor, as far as I know, did justice ever overtake them for this cruel and daring crime. The wife of the unhappy man was sent back by the Prince and myself to her family in Malta, who received her kindly.

The surgeon called in to see the body gave it as his opinion that poor Courtney had first been chloroformed, then suffocated in a vapor bath—was it, I thought, in that horrid room toward which they had dragged me?

The Power of Song.

The following true and touching incident is told of the effect of hearing for the first time the song of "FATHER, DEAR FATHER, COME HOME."

A constant frequenter of a public alehouse was sitting at a table, with a glass of liquor in his hand. Night after night, in the "wee, sma' hours," he would go home intoxicated, saddening the hearts of the household. This evening, some one in good voice, commenced singing this song, which instantly riveted his attention, and as it appealed more and more to his heart, it so softened it, that he quietly emptied the contents of the glass into the spittoon at his side, and, as the song finished with "Father, dear father, come home," he left the room, and never since has indulged his former taste, but has become a steady workman, following his trade, blessing his family with love, and gladly offering thanks to the writer of words so touching in their simplicity, yet powerful in their effect, that one lost to the influence of kind friends, grew strong under them. Such may be the power of a simple song!

AFTER THE PARTY.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

BY DOLORES.

A face, oh! a face so exquisitely fair,
With a half-blown rose in her waving hair.

And her silvery laugh that haunts me so!
Like a bird's clear song—like music low.

And a magic light in the liquid depth lies,
Kittie, darling Kittie! of those dark blue eyes.

Exceeding dear, oh! so fair and sweet,
Is the glimpse of a face in my dreams I meet.

DENE HOLLOW.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,

AUTHOR OF

"EAST LYNNE," &c.

[The advance sheets of this story have been purchased of Mrs. Wood for THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

PART THE SECOND.

CHAPTER XII.

BEEN WITH THE OLD SQUIRE IN THE NIGHT.

Knock, knock, knock!

The knocking, very gentle, was at Sir Dene's chamber-door, Gander stood there, in the dull light of the November morning. "If my bell does not ring, call me at nine o'clock," were Sir Dene's orders to Gander the previous night. Very unusual orders indeed.

For Sir Dene, unless he was actually ill, liked to be up by times as of yore. The once hale old man was breaking up fast: more than age was telling upon him. Generally speaking, his bell rang for his shaving water long before eight.

He had felt out of sorts the previous day. Not ill; "out of sorts," he answered when questioned. News had come in of a sad stage-coach accident on the awkward old bridge at Powick; and it had recalled to Sir Dene all the back trouble of the accidents on Dene Hollow. Not that the trouble needed re-calling: more or less, it was ever present with him.

Knock, knock, knock. Rather louder.

"Come in then. Can't ye hear?"

By which irritable answer Gander found his master must have spoken before. The feeble voice had failed to catch his ear. In went the old serving man—for Gander was himself getting tolerably old now—in the striped jacket he always, winter and summer, wore in a morning. Sir Dene, a cotton night-cap on, with a hanging tassel, raised his head on the pillow.

"Where's the hot water?"

For Gander had come empty handed.

"I've not brought it, Sir Dene. I thought maybe ye'd take a bit o' breakfast afore stirring."

Now Sir Dene was feeling weak, shaky, feverish: almost as though he should like some breakfast first. But he had an unconquerable aversion to giving way.

"I don't know, Gander. I'd like to be up and doing as long as I can."

"It's a regular stinger of a morning, master. Wind nor-east, and enough to cut one in two. Air bleak, and as dull as ditch-water."

"Is it? We don't have the fine weather we used," remarked Sir Dene—as many another old man is apt to say and think. "There's no good bright days now, Gander; no sparkling crisp sunshiny frost. What's become of 'em?"

"It have been a dull autumn; and it seems to be a setting in for a dull winter," returned Gander. "I'll fetch you up a cup o' tea, Sir Dene. It'll do ye good."

Quitting the chamber before Sir Dene could make any denial, he speedily reappeared with a small tray of breakfast. A cup of tea, hot buttered toast, and an egg. Sir Dene sat partly up; drank some of the tea, and then lay down again.

"You'll try a bit o' the toast, sir."

A slight waive of the hand answered him. Gander, who must have been ill indeed not to relish his own breakfast, pressed it with concern.

"You'd relish it, I think, Sir Dene. It have got plenty o' butter on't."

"I've no appetite, Gander, I think my time's coming."

Gander understood the allusion—that it meant for death—and felt a little uncomfortable. As he stood looking down at Sir Dene, he saw that the once fresh and healthy face had an unusual pallor on it. Between the white night-cap and the white pillow, it looked nearly as white as they did.

"You'll be better after breakfast, Sir Dene. It's this nasty gray east windy morning, as is upsetting everybody. I wish you'd try the toast."

"Squire Arde came and paid me a visit in the night, Gander. I think we shall soon be together again."

Gander could not make out what Sir Dene was rambling about. He had drawn up the blinds, and now glanced round to the gray skies he had been talking of—as if that would help him.

"The old Squire, ye know, Gander. He looked just as he used to look; he'd got his pepper and salt suit on, and the little old drab overcoat atop. We were having a comfortable chat together, him and me. 'Twas like old times."

"It must have been a dream, master."

"Well, I suppose it was. It seemed like reality. As happy as kingfishers, we were, us two, chatting together. It seemed good to be with him."

"This toast'll be cold, sir. I know a bit on't 'ud bring you round."

"Won't be long, I take it, Gander, before I go to him. It's getting a'most time. God, He knows best. But I don't think it'll be long."

Drinking up the rest of the tea, Gander dexterously put some toast into the old man's hand. Sir Dene eat it up; perhaps half unconsciously. Nevertheless, he did seem better after it, and then said he would take some more tea.

"It was that dratted coach a overturning on Powick Bridge, as upset him," soliloquised Gander, going out with the cup to replenish it. But there's times now when he's not a bit like himself. Fancy his saying he've had a visit from old Arde!"

The postman's ring echoed through the hall as Gander crossed it; and the locked bag was taken up as usual to Lady Lydia. In going back with the tea, Gander halted at my lady's door to inquire if there were any letters for his master.

Two. Sir Dene looked at their handwriting as he sipped his tea. They were from two of his grandchildren: Dene, the heir, and the barrister Otto. Laying them on the counterpane unopened, he began to eat another bit of toast, the faithful servant standing by.

"Ay. They think it's right to show the old grandfather that they don't forget him, these young blades. But there's one of 'em that doesn't write, Gander."

Gander knew quite well to whom this alluded. Sir Dene was in the habit of talking to him of things that he never mentioned to other people.

"Well, Sir Dene—I've said it afore, and I says it again—my own opinion is, as Mr. Tom have wrote, and his letter must ha' got dropped into the sea a crossing it."

"Nonsense!" peevishly cried Sir Dene. "Letters don't get lost like that."

"'Tain't like Mr. Tom to bear malice; and I know he don't bear it. I'd write him a word, Sir Dene, if I was you, and tell him to come. Likely, he don't dare to make a move without a word from you."

It was just what had been, on and off, hovering in Sir Dene's mind for some weeks past—to write and summons Tom. Perhaps it wanted but this word of urging to put it in practice. "I think I will," he said. "He has been banished long enough for punishment. I'll do it as soon as I'm up, Gander."

And, having an object to accomplish, Sir Dene got up at once. When shaved and dressed, he sat down by the blazing fire in the next room and penned to Tom a letter of recall, short, kind and peremptory. His hands shook, but the words were clear. Folding it up, as letters were folded up in those days when envelopes were unknown, he sealed it with a big red seal and stamped it with the Clanwaring Arms, Gander holding the lighted taper. When the seal was cold he dipped his pen in the ink and began to address it.

"Tom Clanwaring, Esquire." Thus far had Sir Dene proceeded, when he looked up.

"What's the direction, Gander?"

"I'm sure I don't know," said Gander. "I heard it once—a place with a crackjaw name."

Sir Dene laid down the pen in consternation. Was Tom in some unknown region of Ireland where he could neither be written to nor got at? Re-assurance came to Sir Dene.

"My lady must know it, Gander. It's where some of her people live. Go and ask her for it."

Away went Gander. Never a suspicion of any treachery on my lady's part, in regard to Tom, had occurred to this simple man and his simple master. Simple in all confiding honor. My lady and her eldest son were easily sitting together at a well spread breakfast table, by a blazing fire: my lady in a kind of brown "sacque," the pattern of which might have been taken from a pillow case; Jarvis in a flowery dressing-gown. Their conversation was brought to a sudden stand-still as the servant went in.

"My lady, will you be so good as to give me Mr. Tom's direction?"

For answer, my lady, a little taken to, stared at Gander up and down.

"Sir Dene has sent me for it," added the man.

"What does Sir Dene want with it?" she questioned.

"I believe it's to address a letter to him," said Gander, who never was too obliging to my lady. "Sir Dene is waiting for it now, please."

Quite equal to the occasion was Lady Lydia, without the help of that interchanged glance with her son. "I must search in my desk for it, Gander. My best regards to Sir Dene, and I'll send it to him almost immediately."

"The goat is being recalled," remarked Jarvis when they were alone.

"I daresay. He is not coming though."

"'Twould hardly be policy. You must fail to find the address."

"I'll give one that won't reach him," whispered Lady Lydia.

She soon appeared in Sir Dene's room, and found him restlessly waiting—for he retained a great deal of his old impatience still. On a piece of paper in her hand was written a long address that Gander might have decidedly pronounced to be "crackjaw."

"Dear Sir Dene! How are you to-day? Tom's address do you want? Here it is."

Sir Dene read it over, and copied it on the letter.

"You take care of this and post it when you are at Worcester to-day, Gander," said he, handing the letter to the man.

"It can go in the bag, Sir Dene," interposed my lady. "I shall have letters to send off myself to-day."

"Gander's going to Worcester: he'll post it there," persisted Sir Dene, really from no other motive than a spice of obstinacy. And Lady Lydia turned green as she thought how very near the letter would have been to reaching Tom, but for her precautions in regard to the address.

"Have you been writing to Tom at last, Sir Dene?"

"I've been writing for him to come home, Lydia; he has been banished long enough. I can't help it if it offends you. I don't think I shall be very much longer among you all, and I'd like to have him here. He was poor Geoff's legacy to us, you know."

"Oh, Sir Dene, don't say that. You'll be among us for years yet, I hope."

"It strikes me not. I've been with old Squire Arde three parts of the night; a token, I take it, that I shall be with him in reality."

Lady Lydia stared a little, and glanced at Gander.

"I've not much to keep me here now," went on Sir Dene. "But I should like to live to see Tom come home."

"You got your letters from Dene and Otto?" observed Lady Lydia, by way of drowning the last remark. "What do they say?"

"They don't say much. Dene and Charley are coming for the wedding. Otto—well—I—I have not read Otto, have I, Gander?"

"I didn't see you read it, Sir Dene," replied Gander, who was busying himself about the room. "The letter's at your elbow, sir."

"It's not often Otto writes," remarked Sir Dene, breaking the seal of the barrister's letter. "His time's too well taken up; if Jarvis had only half his patience, 'twould be better for him, Lydia. Otto will make a name in the world, once he can work himself into note—get on to be a judge, I shouldn't wonder."

"He was of a plodding nature even as a boy," rather scornfully rejoined Lady Lydia. She had no love for her son Otto.

"Now look here!" cried Sir Dene, as he read his letter. "Here's Tom been writing from Ireland to Otto to ask how I am, and saying he cannot get to hear a word of Beechhurst Dene from anybody. That was two months ago, Otto says. So Tom doesn't quite forget the old man."

Lady Lydia, taking in the sense of the words as well as her anger allowed, felt that she should like to annihilate that blundering fool, Otto.

"But why the deuce doesn't Tom write direct and ask?" burst forth Sir Dene, rather explosively. "It's his temper keeps him from it; that's what it is. He must have got a touch of the Clanwaring obstinacy after all; though poor Geoffry hadn't. Anyway, he'll have my letter now as soon as the post can take it to him. Don't you forget it, Gander."

"No danger, Sir Dene. I'll be too glad to see Master Tom back at home myself to forget it," added bold Gander for the particular benefit of my lady. "The house have never been the same without him."

"And see that his room is got ready, and all that, mind, Gander."

"It's always a ready and waiting for him, Sir Dene."

"What else does Otto say, Sir Dene?" inquired Lady Lydia, with an impassive face.

"What else? Well, he says he shall hope to be down at the wedding. There; you may take his letter away and read it if you like."

The wedding, thus mentioned by Sir Dene's grandson, was that of Captain Clanwaring. For Mary Arde, yielding to persecution (as she regarded it) and fate, had at length been won over to fix the probable time. When told by her father and mother that it must take place before the year was out, and bade to say *when*, she answered in her desperation "After Christmas, then."

Her conscience smote her as she said it; smote her of sin. For, down deep in her heart lingered vividly as ever the image of that scapegrace Tom; and in spite of her secret prayers, her tears, her striving, she could not thrust it out. Since that summer evening's visit to the Trailing Indian, not a doubt had rested on her mind of Tom Clanwaring's disloyalty to her and of his utter worthlessness; and yet—love him less she could not. "I may be able to forget him, once I am married," she said to herself over and over again; and—as good marry Jarvis as anybody else."

And, in a short while after making the concession, May absolutely began to regard it as a boon, and to look forward to the marriage with a something like satisfaction. Not in the marriage itself, poor girl; but as a release from uncertainty. The unrest of her life was so great as to be absolute torment. Thus matters were arranged to the satisfaction of everybody; other people were all agog with pleasure; and on May's part there was no thought of drawing back. Sir Dene liked the proposed union immensely. He privately deemed May a great deal too good for Jarvis; but that was the Ardes business, not his. Lady Lydia was in the seventh heaven of delight: and the Squire's wife wrote sundry letters to intimate friends, apprising them of the completion of the contract of marriage between Captain Jarvis Clanwaring and her beloved daughter, Millicent Mary Arde. The reader will therefore readily understand how objectionable would be the return of Tom Clanwaring to upset, or possibly to upset, the onward stream of events, coursing along so smoothly.

"Once get the wedding over, and he shall come, if it must be so," said Lady Lydia to Jarvis, "but that must take place in safety first."

Jarvis resented the intimation. It was as much as to insinuate that May cared for Tom still, more than she did for him: his hair and his temper alike bristled up. The captain was a very attentive lover; never a day passed but he would be at the Hall once or twice. But any attempt to enter on the endearments lovers suppose they have a right to offer, was so promptly discouraged by May, in fact he saw they would be so evidently distasteful, that the gallant captain prudently confided his display of affection to warm hand-shakes. Now and again he ran up to town for three or four days, and May would then feel free as a bird in the air.

In the afternoon of the cold and bleak November day, spoken of above, May, well muffled up, returned to the Hall in her father's open carriage, having been with him to Worcester. Whether it was her chronic state of low spirits and the inanimation they caused, that rendered her chilly, certain it was, she now always felt more or less cold. Her errand to Worcester had been to the dressmaker's; to try on certain of the dresses that were being prepared for the wedding. Mrs. Arde, suffering from some temporary indisposition, had remained at home.

"You look cold, May," said the Squire, as he gave his hand to help her down.

"Do I, papa? It is cold. I think I will run about a bit to warm myself, before going in."

May's "running about to warm herself" consisted in a listless kind of slow sauntering. She was not in spirits to run. Walking about the premises, back and front, buried in her own sad thoughts, she was about to turn in at the gate leading to the kitchen garden, when she saw Cole, the farrier, turn out of the stables. A favorite carriage-horse of the Squire's was ill at the time. May waited at the gate till the man came up.

"Is old Jack better?" she asked.

"Not much, Miss May. I've been giving him another ball."

"What a cold day it is!" cried May—and she shivered a little as she spoke.

"Coldish," returned the man. "It strikes me we shall have a hard winter of it, Miss May."

"I hope not—for the poor's sake," was May's answer. Her sweet brown eyes, with a whole flood of sadness lying in their depths, went straight out to his. Cole and Miss May had been on quite familiar terms always, so to say: the result of his sister's being the young lady's attendant. When Miss May was a little tottering damsel in backstrings, Harry Cole, the good-natured laughing stripling, would toss the little lady "up to the moon." They were great friends still.

"I hear Mr. Tom's sent for back, Miss May."

At the unexpected words, a rush of crimson dyed May's face. Harry Cole, who had more innate delicacy than many gentlemen, had stooped to get some spots of mud off his trowsers at the ankle, and missed the sight.

"Indeed," said May, constraining her voice to indifference.

"While I was at the Dene just now, Gander got in from Worcester. He told me he had been a posting a letter for Mr. Tom—that Sir Dene has wrote to call him home again. It's too bad to have kept him over in that Irish place so long, Miss May."

"They say it has been for punishment," returned May, fiddling with the latch of the gate.

"I know they say it. Anyway, Miss May, that does for an excuse. Punishment for what, I wonder."

"All kinds of things are laid to his charge."

"Well, so they were, Miss May. But they didn't go down with them that knew him."

May felt as if her life's blood were coursing about anyhow. As Susan said, Cole had never been able to see a fault in Tom Clanwaring.

"There was that bag of money you know. That was absurd."

"Oh dear yes," answered Cole, with a laugh. "And lots more besides that. Some things are believed to this day as if they were gospel. Mr. Tom's one person and I be another, Miss May: but I know this—that if it had been me, I should have come back and faced it long ago. Any way I hope he'll soon be here, now."

"Susan has got the toothache," said May, by way of turning off the subject.

"Serves her right; why doesn't she get it took out?" said Cole, who had none too much sympathy with Susan: she, in the right of her superior years, having been accustomed to domineer over him from childhood to now in the most unscrupulous manner, "I've told her, Miss May—and others have told her, that she'll get no proper rest till she's rid of the tooth: but she is just as pig-headed over it—"

"Is that you, Harry Cole? Come here."

Cole turned at the calling voice to see the Squire. Touching his hat to the Squire's daughter, he hastened away.

"Sent for at last, is he!" thought May. "But I don't think he will dare to come. Oh dear! what an unhappy thing this life is!"

She went indoors at once, too miserable to stay out. Utterly wretched was she, half reckless; and felt that she would give all the chance of future happiness in this life to get away from marriage and Jarvis Clanwaring. Not that there was the smallest thought that she *could*. Fate was fate, and she might not turn aside from it. Susan Cole, her apron held up to her cheek, came forward to meet her in the hall.

"Here's Captain Clanwaring awaiting for you in the little parlor, Miss May."

CHAPTER XIII.

OVER THE CLARET CUP.

"It seems very odd, Gander."

"Never a answer to it of any sort, Mr. Otto; neither of coming nor writing. Never no more notice took on't than if it had been dirt."

"Well, I cannot understand it."

The glitter of plate and glass was on the supper table, at which Otto Clanwaring sat. He laid down his knife and fork to talk to the old serving man, who stood close to him, his eager face bent forward with excitement under the wax lights.

It was the Wednesday before Christmas, and Otto Clanwaring had just arrived at the Dene. For two purposes: to kill, as may be said, two birds with one stone. The one to spend as usual the Christmastide; the other to assist in celebrating the marriage of Captain Clanwaring.

The wedding was fixed for Tuesday, the twenty-seventh of December. Miss Arde had held to her original determination—not to be married before Christmas. Captain Clanwaring pleaded for an earlier period in vain; and was at length fain to show himself grateful for the tardy one ultimately fixed. So the preparations were put in hand, and the invitations sent out.

Christmas day this year would fall on Sunday. This you understand was the week preceding it. On Monday, the nineteenth, the Squire went to London, on business connected with his daughter's settlements and also to procure the marriage license. He intended to return by the Thursday night's mail, so as to be at home on Friday morning; which would be the day before Christmas Eve. The Hall was in the full swing of preparation for the festivities attendant on the wedding. Beechhurst Dene had made ready, too, in anticipation of its expected guests.

Mrs. Letsom and her children had accompanied Otto from London. It had not been Otto's intention to quit his work until the Friday; but his sister had appealed to him to accompany her; and she would not start later. Colonel Letsom was in India with his regiment. They took the day coach to Worcester, and thence drove over to the Dene; reaching it as the night clocks were striking ten, amidst a sharp fall of snow.

Sir Dene, weak in health, subdued in spirit, but dressed with extreme care as usual, his coat blue, his fine white hair (scanty now) powdered, sat in the large drawing-room to receive them. Lady Lydia was with him, and also a shrunken-looking little lady in grey silk and hair as white as Sir Dene's and a close white net cap on with satin bows. It was Miss Clewer: sister of Sir Dene's late wife. The reader had the pleasure of once seeing her—at that stormy interview that witnessed the turning out of poor Geoffry. She was now considerably turned seventy; but she had come posting over in her carriage-and-four from her residence in Gloucestershire, to be present at the first marriage that was to take place amid her grand nephews. The nephews and Louisa Letsom called her Aunt Ann, just as their fathers had done.

During the commotion caused by the entrance of the travellers, Jarvis came in, the bridegroom elect; came in from his usual evening visit to the Hall. In spite of the elaboration of his getting up, the curled hair, the shining moustache, and all the rest of the attractions, Otto thought he looked strangely haggard. Almost as much so as Sir Dene. And Sir Dene's looks had struck the barrister painfully.

"How dreadfully he is changed, mother," whispered Otto, under cover of the bustle.

"Changed!" repeated Lady Lydia, her eyes and thoughts on her well-beloved son, the gallant captain. "Who's changed?"

"The poor old grandfather."

"Oh. He. He is getting on for eighty, Otto. You cannot expect him to be blooming forever."

"It's not exactly that—blooming. There's so intense a sadness on his face. He looks just as though he were worn with sorrow."

"Did you ever see such a shrivelled-up mummy as old Aunt Ann!" returned my lady, behind her fan. "If you'll believe me,

Otto, she has brought a cat and a parrot with her and two maids: one for herself, the other for the animals."

"She has never had children, you see, mother," was Otto's considerate answer. "When we live a lonely life, we are apt to make pets for ourselves."

Gander had supper ready laid in the dining-room. Mrs. Letsom—her head aching intolerably from the cold and the very long journey, for they had left London at six in the morning—declined to take any, saying she would rather go at once to bed: so Otto went in to his supper alone. During which, he and Gander had a dish of confidential chat together, after the custom of old times. They were talking of Tom Clanwaring. The summons sent to him by Sir Dene had brought forth no response whatever; as Gander was telling.

"I don't believe he ever got it," exclaimed Otto.

"He must ha' got it," returned Gander resentfully. "Don's I tell ye, Mr. Otto, that I put it myself into the slit of the box at Worcester? As good suppose that the mail didn't go out, as that that there letter didn't go along of it. Try a bit of raised-pie, sir."

Otto shook his head. Pies so late at night were too heavy for him. "If he did get the letter and could not respond to it in person, he might have written to Sir Dene.

"That's just what Sir Dene says. It have tried him more nor anything a'most, that went afore it, Mr. Otto. For days and days, ay for weeks and weeks, after there was time for Mr. Tom to get here, Sir Dene was waiting and watching for him. 'Perhaps he'll be here by morning, Gander,' he'd say to me when he went to bed at night, and I' the morning the first question 'ud be, 'Gander, has he come?' It has just been like a heart-break to him."

Otto Clanwaring, his supper finished, leaned back in his chair. There was something in all this that greatly puzzled him.

"To be recalled was what he wanted, I am sure of it," remarked the barrister. "I cannot think why he should not have come."

Neither could Gander. Neither could Sir Dene. Neither, truth to say, could many other people. Sir Dene supposed that Tom was too conscious of his unworthy doings in connection with the Trailing Indian to show his face again yet awhile: and Sir Dene resented it accordingly.

The Chinese have a notes proverb: "To expect one who does not come; to lie in bed and not sleep; to serve and not be advanced, are three things enough to kill a man."

It would almost seem as if the non-arrival of his favorite grandson were killing Sir Dene. But the yearning wish to see him, and deferred hope, the grievous disappointment, were giving place now to angry implacability.

"I never thought as Mr. Tom was one to resent affronts in this fashion," spoke Gander, beginning to remove the supper things. "Poor Mr. Geoffry wouldn't ha' done it."

"Nor I. He has the most forgiving disposition in the world. Besides—"

Otto stopped. The door was pushed open, and Sir Dene came tottering in, leaning on his stick.

"I hope you've got what you like, Otto. There's been nobody to take it with you."

"I've done famously, grandfather. No, thank you, no more. I never dare take much late at night, or I should get in for a headache in the morning. Gander and I were talking about Tom, Sir. It seems a very strange thing that he—"

"Don't speak of him to me: don't mention him in my presence," roared Sir Dene, lifting his stick menacingly at an imaginary Tom in the distance. "If he were to attempt to enter Beechhurst Dene now, my servants should thrust him forth. Never again; never again."

"There's something or other wants explaining in all this," thought Otto. "However, it is no business of mine," he mentally concluded, with his usual rather selfish indifference to other people's interests.

Gander brought in some mulled port in a silver cup; and Sir Dene and Otto sat over the fire and sipped it. Little things troubled Sir Dene now, and he began mentioning the state of expectancy he had been in all day, looking for his two eldest nephews, Dene and Charles. Eldest in point of precedence, youngest in age. They were to have arrived at the Dene that morning from Scotland; and had not come.

"Sure they've never been so foolish as to take ship—which Dene's fond of doing in summer," said Sir Dene rather fractiously. "They might be kept out at sea a couple 'o weeks, if they've done that."

"They'd be sure to come by land, sir, at this season of the year, and with time limited," returned Otto. "Is their mother coming with them?"

"She can't," returned Sir Dene. "I'm sorry for it; for she's a great favorite of mine," and I've not seen her for these two years. There's more things than one going contrary just now, Otto."

"But why can't she come, sir?"

"Because she's ill. I b'lieve its intermittent fever, or something of that. D'ye think the boys can get here to-night, Otto?" he added after a pause.

"Well—of course it is just possible," replied Otto, in some consideration; and he felt sure now that the old man was sitting up, expecting them. "They'd come by coson no doubt to the nearest place to this that the stage touches at, and then post on. I don't think they'd be likely to come so late as this, grandfather. We shall see them in the morning."

"Ay, I suppose one must give 'em up for to-night," conceded Sir Dene. "And how is the world using you, Otto? Are you getting on?"

"Yes, I am getting on, grandfather," returned Otto, proud in his independent spirit, of being able to say it. "My name is becoming known and business drops in. No fear now but I shall make my way; and make it well."

"Ay, I always said you would, give you time, though you have been so kept back by struggles and expenses," observed Sir Dene. "You have been steady and hard-working from the first, Otto; and those who are so are sure to get on. It is the conviction that has lain on my mind of your steady perseverance, my lad, that has induced me to help you so readily in your embarrassments."

Happening to be holding the claret cup to his lips at that moment, Otto looked at Sir Dene over its brim. He did not quite understand.

"I have had no embarrassments, sir," he said as he put it down.

"Well, expenses then: I suppose I ought not to say embarrassments. Whatever they were, I only felt they were legitimate. And I let you have the money with a very different feeling from any I ever let your spendthrift brother have; I can tell you that."

Less and less did Otto understand. "I have not had any money from you since you first started me in life, grandfather. There are moments," he added with a slight laugh, "when I feel proud of that fact. At least I am thankful for it."

"What do you call your first starting in life?" cried Sir Dene, looking hard at his grandson.

"After I had kept my terms and was called to the Bar, you generously put a check for five hundred pounds into my hands, sir. To start me in my profession, as you called it."

"Well?"

"Well, it did start me, grandfather. I set up my chambers with it—that didn't cost much: for all the furniture in them, bed included, is not worth twenty pounds. And the rest I husbanded and lived as economically upon as I could until work came in. I have never had cause to ask you for more, grandfather; and I never have asked it."

"Don't quibble, my lad. If you've not asked, yourself, for it, you have had it."

"Had what, sir?"

"Had what—why money. And I say, Otto, I have given it you with more satisfaction than any ever given to Jarvis."

"But grandfather, I have not had any from you at all, I am happy to say. Except that first five hundred pounds."

Sir Dene and his grandson were staring at each other with all their might. Sir Dene openly. Otto covertly: for he thought the poor old man's imagination was solely at work: that his memory was rambling.

"Five or six times at the very least, Otto—more I think; my books will tell—have I helped you to money within the last two or three years. Sometimes for large sums. Why should you wish to deny it?"

"It must be all a mistake, sir. I have had none."

Sir Dene leaned back in his chair, his lips compressed. Were *all* his grandchildren turning out false? He had believed Otto to be so strictly truthful.

"How dare you say this to my face, young man?"

"It is the truth, grandfather. I don't know what else to say," and so earnestly did Otto say it, that Sir Dene almost began to wonder whether he himself was dreaming.

"Only a month or two ago—'twas some time in October—I sent you up a check for a hundred pounds. Sent it up in a letter direct to your chambers. Come! What do you say to that?"

"I received it, sir, all safely, and acknowledged it to my brother, as he desired I should," quietly answered Otto. "I paid it away the same day, in conformity with his instructions."

For some moments Sir Dene did not speak. A light seemed to be breaking upon him.

"Paid it away for yourself, or for Jarvis?"

"Oh, for Jarvis."

"I see, just tell me what you know about it, Otto."

"I don't know much, grandfather. Two letters were delivered to me that morning, each bearing the Worcester post mark. The one contained a few unimportant words from you to myself, hoping I was well and that; and a check for a hundred pounds. The other was from Jarvis; saying I should receive such a check if I would kindly pay it away to a person (a lawyer) who would call on me in the course of the day. The lawyer called, and I paid it to him."

"One more question, Otto: and yet, my boy, I hardly need to ask it. Is it true, what you say—that you have never had any money from me since that first five hundred pounds?"

"It is perfectly true. Neither have I asked you for any, sir."

"No, but others have, in your name."

"Jarvis, I suppose."

"Once or twice. Your mother chiefly, Otto," continued the old baronet, bending his fine old face forward, and sinking his voice to a troubled whisper, "she'd sell her son for that first-born son of hers. It's my belief she'd sell her soul."

There was an ominous silence. Sir Dene, sat, half-beaten under the discovery; his head bent in thought, lifting this hand, lifting that, as he recalled the false pleas pressed upon him from time to time—Otto's non-success in his profession, his heavy expenses, and urgent need of money to rub on with, so as to keep his head above water. Never had the conduct of Captain Clanwaring appeared so flagrant as now. A groan burst from the old man.

"Otto, I hardly know whether I ought to let this wedding take place. Whether in honor I should not show the Squire what a false man he is—a spendthrift—a coward."

"There's no doubt, sir, that Jarvis ran recklessly and foolishly into debt while he was in the army, and that he has been driven to his wits ends to find money to stave off the embarrassment it entailed upon him; but marriage may make the turning point in his life. I should say it would."

And Sir Dene groaned again in very bitterness of spirit, as he rose to go up to his room for the night, leaning on the held-out arm of Otto.

The morning brought disappointment in the shape of a letter from Dene the heir. He wrote to say that a change for the worse had taken place in his mother. She was becoming so dangerously ill that neither he nor his brother could think of leaving her even to attend the wedding. The letter concluded with a half-jesting wish, that Jarvis might find a better groomsman. For young Dene (considered as first and foremost in the Clanwaring family after its head) had been solicited by Jarvis to undertake that office. Jarvis, with rather an ill grace, observed to the barrister that he supposed the honor must fall to his lot now; and said it as if he grudged it to him.

"It's not such an honor—as I look upon it," was the significant retort of Otto Clanwaring.

CHAPTER XIV.

AN ARRIVAL AT THE TRAILING INDIAN.

The snow-flakes were falling, large and thick. Falling on the hat of Mr. Sam Pound, swinging by one leg on the gate of the Trailing Indian. His master was out. Black had gone down to Hurst Leet on some urgent private business; no doubt connected with certain poaching friends of his who lived there. At least, such was the conclusion drawn by young Mr. Pound, who was tolerably shrewd. Finding it rather lonely indoors as twilight approached, for not a soul was in the dreary inn but himself, Mr. Pound had stepped out to have a look at the lane, by way of taking a slight change.

"Mother Goose *be* a plucking of her geese," quoth he to himself, raising his eyes to the floating feathers that filled the air. "Us ha'nt had a reg'lar snowy Christmas this ever-so-long. Bids fair for't now."

This was Friday. On and off since Wednesday the snow had been falling; so that the roads were already pretty thick with it. Regarding a fall of snow chiefly as a medium for the recreative exercise of snowballing, and especially of snowballing some unsuspicious individual, whom the blow caught unaware, Mr. Pound was extremely satisfied with the prospect before him.

"We shall ha' the morris-dancers here," cried he, sucking up his breath. For he was very fond of morris-dancers; and thought them, next to snowballing his friends and enemies, the best things brought by a hard winter.

Swinging to and fro on the gate was rather slow work, particularly as the snow had got into the gate's hinges and prevented its swaying quickly. Taking his foot off, he picked up a handful of snow and sent it bang against the opposite hedge of holly. A sure marksman he, when a snowball was the weapon.

"Hal-lo!"

The exclamation was caused by surprise. Just as Mr. Pound was manipulating a second ball to fling after the first, a huge mountain of snow—and it looked like nothing else—loomed slowly into view on the high road that crossed the end of the lane. Peering at this extraordinary phenomenon as well as circumstances permitted him—that is, between the fading daylight and the storm of snow—Mr. Pound at length made it out to be the "wagon."

"Well, I never!" cried he. "That there wagin haven't hurried herself."

In those days the wagon was an institution in England: and was used for the conveyance of parcels and passengers from one town to another. This particular wagon in question was in the habit of passing the road weekly, generally at dawn on a Friday morning—for wagons travelled night and day. They could not afford to halt by night on the road, not they: on they blundered, crawling and creeping, and dragging their slow length along. A distance that a stage-coach might take twelve or fifteen hours to accomplish, the wagon could get through in a week. That this one had been a tolerably long time on the journey, was proved by the amount of snow collected about it.

"Black, he said as he hadn't a seen the wagin go by, and I telled him it had went by afore he was up. Thought it had. Hallo! it be a-stopping."

The stopping of the wagon opposite to the lane was less surprising to Mr. Pound than the sight of the wagon itself had been; for it sometimes brought parcels for the Trailing Indian. Now and then it let out passengers at that place to claim hospitality, or to go on to Hurst Leet. Strictly speaking, this was what might be called a cross-country wagon, communicating with the London and Worcester wagon, the London and Gloucester wagon, and other wagons of importance. Mr. Pound began to trudge towards it, to receive anything there might be for his master. He could not resist the temptation of sending a snowball or two at the horses.

"I'll lay a twopence as it have brought that there box o' baccy from Lunnon!" thought he as he advanced. "Black have been a-growling over it this—"

Mr. Pound's words failed him in very surprise. Of all the surprises brought by the wagon, this was the greatest. Instead of the expected "box o' baccy" disinterring itself from the inside, there appeared, helped out by the wagoner—Miss Emma Geach.

Mr. Pound's first movement was to halt where he stood, and give vent to a low whistle; his second, to turn tail, scutter home, bang-to the inn-door behind him, and slip the bolt. The return of this young person displeased him excessively. Of the two, he would rather the wagon had brought a wild bear. Miss Geach was at the door almost as soon as he, rattling at it in an authoritative manner, when she found it fastened.

"Now then, Sam Pound, open the door! What do you mean by this?"

So, she had recognized him, in spite of the falling snow and the twilight! Not seeing his way particularly clear to keep her out, Sam unbolted the door.

She came in with her old warm cloak drawn round her, worn and shabby now, and a ragged shawl tied over her bonnet. She had gone away grandly by coach, plump, blooming, her big band-box of clothes beside her; she came home humbly in the wagon, thin and cross-looking, and with no luggage at all—unless a handful of things tied up in a cotton handkerchief could be called such. Sam Pound, backing against the rack behind the door, made his observations in silence.

"Take a cup o' beer to the wagoner, Sam Pound, and be quick about it."

Whatever Miss Geach had lost in the way of looks, she had kept her tongue. Sam would no more have dared to disobey the imperative order than he'd have attempted to fly. Drawing the beer, he went out with it, walking as slow as he could, and sullenly kicking the snow before him. In the first place, Sam held Miss Geach in no favor; her scornful treatment of his brother Jim excited his resentment, and he also disliked her on his own account. In the second place, suppositions were crossing his mind that now she was back, he might no longer be wanted at the Trailing Indian: and, as it was a tolerably idle service, it just suited Mr. Sam.

When he returned indoors, and he took his time over the errand, Miss Geach had been upstairs to her room, had put on a gown of hers that had stayed all this while at the inn, and was down in the kitchen again, making some tea. Brushed up a little from her cold journey of several days and nights, she looked tolerably the same as usual. A little thin, perhaps, but quite as good-looking.

"Toast this bread, Sam Pound."

Sam Pound's mind was so entirely stunned by the proceedings altogether, that he complied mechanically, and stooped down to toast the bread. Two rounds of it, off the quartern loaf. Miss Geach put on plenty of salt butter, drew the table closer to the fire, and sat down to her tea.

"Where's Black?" she asked then.

"He's a went off to Hurst Leet."

Sam had squatted himself against the wall on the other side of the fireplace, and sat facing her, his hands clasped round his smock-frock and legs. The reflection of the flame played on the red bricks; the kitchen looked homely and comfortable in the fire light.

"Wonder when her had any tea last?" thought Sam, as he watched the eagerness with which she ate and drank; "shouldn't think 'twas o' one while."

"And how's the place going on, Sam Pound?" demanded Miss Emma, pouring out another cup of tea and beginning upon the second round of toast.

"Mortal dull. Us haven't had a customer in all to-day, not for as much as a pint o' beer."

"Who was asking about this here inn? I mean the place out o' doors. Hurst Leet, and that."

"It be as it al'ays is, for what I see," returned Sam, ungraciously determined to give no more information than he could help.

"Anybody dead?"

"The morris here be dead."

"Don't I tell ye I warn't asking about this here house, Sam Pound," was her answer, given wrathfully. "How's Cole, at the Smithy?"

"He've had a bad wrist, he have, through a beast of a horse what up and kicked him a being shoed. Is be got well again."

"Is Mr. Tom Clanwaring come back?"

"The face her must have to ask *that?*" thought Sam, as he sat and stared. "No, he baint back, be baint."

"I suppose the rest on 'em be coming to the Dene for the Christmas. The heir and his brother—be they here?"

"I ha'n't a seed 'em."

"Be the Lunnon lawyer her yet?"

"I dun know," shortly answered Sam. "Them there quality folks don't concern me, nor me them."

Miss Geach was not to be repressed.

"The captain—be *he* come yet?"

"The captain ha'n't been away, as I've heered on," growled Sam.

"Not away!"

"No, he ha'n't. He lives at the Dene now, he do."

"I'm sure he don't."

"I'se sure he do. There."

Miss Geach about to drink up a saucerful of tea, paused with the saucer to her mouth—

"Who says he do, Sam Pound?"

"I says it, for one. All the parish knows he do. Baint he about the place everlasting."

"Be you sure?"

"Be *you* sure as that there's buttered toast you be a swallowing of?" was Sam's conclusive retort. "The captain have lived along o' Sir Dene o'most a year now, he have."

A peculiar kind of light stole slowly over Miss Geach's face as she took in the assertion, making it look very hard. Sipping up the tea deliberately, she filled the saucer again.

"And the Squire's people, how be they?" she resumed, but with an air of preoccupation and of utter indifference to the question. "Is Miss May married yet?"

"Not as I've heard on," said churlish Sam, more than ever determined to tell nothing of his own accord.

"And how be your own folks a going on since I left these parts, young Sam?" she continued condescendingly.

"They baint dead yet, our folks baint, and there baint none on 'em married," was the spoken response. "Nasty greedy cat!" mentally continued Sam, for his own private benefit. "Her's a gobbling up all that there nice toast, her is, and never offering a fellow a bit! *Soaking* in butter it were!"

Miss Geach had "gobbled up" the first half of the last round, and was beginning the second half. Also she was now stirring the sugar round vigorously in her third cup of tea. Sam, who was inordinately fond of good things, did not know how to suppress his ire.

"Where's that there babby o' yourn?"

At this most unexpected and insolent question, Miss Geach dropped the spoon and some of the tea together. Sam quailed before her hard and haughty look.

"Why, what do you mean, Sam Pound? What babby?"

"Oh, well—I thought perhaps you'd—bought one, you know."

"Did you! Who gave you leave to think, pray? Me bought a babby? What should bring me a buying of a babby?" she continued, peering hard at Sam's countenance, and wondering, perhaps, how to take his words, and whether he was as simple as he was just then looking! "I haven't bought a baubby, nor haven't sold one; nor haven't got one, nor had one. There. Be I married, d'ye suppose, that you should set on and ask me that daft thing!"

Sam had sundry retorts ready at his tongue's end: but he deemed it prudent to let them stay there. In the old days she used to think nothing of slapping his ears. She had hard hands of her own, too.

"Take and fish out the biggest lump o' coal you can find i' the coal-hod, and put it on, Sam Pound. After that, you may shut the shutters and light the candles."

The final piece of toast was being bolted—to use Mr. Sam's private expression—as he slowly rose to obey her. He had a great mind to tell her to put on the coal herself, but it might not be policy. Suppose she took and turned him out that night?

"Mother used to say her had as much stock as old Nick," thought the young man. "Her've got more on't now, her have. Wish the wagin had froze her, I do!"

He had his ten fingers in the large wooden coal-hod, searching for a big lump of coal, when the door was pushed sharply open, and a rush of air, a cloud of snow, and Randy Black burst in together. By the evident haste the latter displayed, one might have supposed he had been seeing another ghost.

"Well, Black, and how be you?"

In the hurry of his arrival, he had not at first noticed her presence. The salutation brought him up, and he stood without motion. Had she been a ghost herself, he could not have gazed more intently.

"It's me, Black. You needn't stand stock still, a staring as if you didn't know me."

"I might well stare, to see *you!*" retorted Black in no pleasant tone. "You impudent hussy! How dare you come back here in this bold way?"

"Because it's my home," returned she with equanimity, as she began to wash up the tea things.

Leaving them to the battle—which Miss Emma Geach would be tolerably sure to gain,—for Black, in his failing health and strength, was no match for her now—we will go on to Beechhurst Dene. Something a little curious was happening there this self-same evening.

Sir Dene, dressed for guests, was standing in the bright light of his sitting-room fire. He was thinking that, what with one non-arrival and another, things were not going as pleasantly as they might have gone. The disappointment about the heir and his brother was still felt by him, and now he had just heard a report that Squire Arde had not returned from London. Gander gave him the information while helping him on with his coat. Captain Clanwaring just come in from the Hall, said its master had not arrived. There was this snow too!

One of the grandest dinners given for many years at the Dene, was to take place this evening. All in honor, of course, of the coming wedding. Invitations had gone out to the first people of the county, including some of its resident nobility, and were accepted. The entertainment was to be on a grand and lavish scale: amidst other things, a band from a distance was engaged to play during the banquet.

On Sunday, Christmas Day, the Ardes would dine quietly at the Dene, as usual. On Monday there would be a grand dinner at the Hall. Not so grand as this one to-night: Arde Hall was not foolish enough to attempt to vie with Beechhurst Dene, or put itself into the same scale of pomp and expenditure. And on Tuesday, the wedding-day, of course the Hall gave a breakfast.

With all his heart, Sir Dene wished this evening over. Truth to say, his strength was not equal to the entertaining of guests: though in his old-fashioned courtesy, he intended to try and do it as in his best days. But, if his old friend and neighbor were to be absent, half of its charm, for him, would have left it. Squire Arde was to have been home certainly, that morning. Sir Dene thought it very hard that he had not come.

"I hope the carriages will be able to get along the roads," thought he, as he went to the window and looked forth on the snowy landscape, shining far and wide in the light night. "It will be a long drive for some of 'em: they'll be twice as long doing it as they would if the roads were clear. Hope they'll take care to set off in time."

It was past five now, and the dinner hour was seven. As Sir Dene stood looking and thinking, the door was tapped at, and Captain Clanwaring put his head in.

"Mr. Arde is not back, sir."

"And why's he not back?" retorted Sir Dene in a taut tone. The tartness not meant for the absent Squire, but for Jarvis himself. Sir Dene had taken his resolution—not to speak at all of the deceit in regard to money matters that had come to his knowledge through Otto: at least, until the wedding should be over. But the fact lay sorely on his mind, and had rendered him barely civil since to either the Captain or Lady Lydia.

"He couldn't get his business done in time to leave London last night; he leaves to-night and will be home to-morrow," said Jarvis. "Mrs. Arde has just had a letter from him."

"A letter at this time of day! What d'ye mean?"

"It was delivered about three o'clock this afternoon, sir. The mail was no doubt late at Worcester, and the road is very heavy now between there and here."

"There's no uncertainty about it, then—he won't be here to dinner?"

"No, sir, he can't be."

Sir Dene turned his back, and Jarvis retreated from the room. By-and-by, when the old man was dozing in his easy chair by the fire, he was woke up by a resplendent vision kneeling at his feet.

It was Mrs. Letsom. She was in a plain pink silk, richly trimmed with lace; but she wore neither flowers nor jewels; her fair neck and arms were bare.

"Grandpapa, I have come with a petition," she coaxingly said, winding her pretty white arms around him. "Oh, if you will but grant it!"

"What is it, my dear?" he asked, bending to kiss her. For he loved her very well; though not as he had loved Margaret. She kept his head down to whisper in his ear.

"Let me wear the diamonds to-night."

Up went Sir Dene's head with a jerk. A jerk of puzzled surprise.

"The diamonds, Louisa! What diamonds?"

"Yours, grandpapa. The Clanwaring diamonds."

Sir Dene shook his head. "Those diamonds have never been got out, except to be looked at, since my wife died."

"Then I'm sure it's time they were aired," returned the young lady.

"Our diamonds are never worn, you see, but by the wife of the reigning baronet, Louisa," he explained, with a touch of the old pride, that was not yet at rest within him. "They will go to young Dene when I die, and be worn by his wife when he shall marry."

"But why need you be so exclusive, grandpapa. Dene's not married, nor likely to be."

"It is our custom, child. Your mother once attacked me on the subject of the diamonds; trying to persuade me to let her wear them. If I remember aright we were going to the ball at Worcester music-meeting, with the Foleys, and others. But I gave her to understand once for all that it could not be."

"That was different, grandpapa. This would be only in our own house, just for to-night. If you would let it be the necklace only, then."

"I don't like to break through the rule, Louisa. Dene might not like it, either."

"Dene's not here. Besides—he has no right to like or dislike anything of the kind as long as you are with us. I think Dene would be the first to say that I should wear them, grandpapa."

Sir Dene remained silent, as if considering. Mrs. Letsom rose, and began turning herself round in the light of the fire, her hands held out.

"My dress looks well, doesn't it, grandpapa? It's new on to-night."

"Very well, my dear."

"But don't you see that I have neither bracelets nor necklace on? I tell you why. While I was dressing just now, my maid discovered the calamity that my jewel box had not come. Not that there's much of value in it, except the pearls. I have nothing to wear to-night, grandpapa."

"Your mother has jewels. Borrow some of her."

"I'd not wear any she's got—wretched old trumpery! Oh, grandpapa, if you would! Just the necklace, only. You would enjoy the benefit of seeing it worn on a neck once again."

And Sir Dene yielded. With the fond face kissing his, and the white arms entwined about him, he could but yield. But only the necklace, he said, and he was resolute in that. Only the necklace."

"Ring for Gander, Louisa."

The diamond-case was kept at the bottom of a chest in the next room, Sir Dene's chamber. Getting his keys, Sir Dene unlocked the chest himself; and Gander dived down with his hands to get it out, in somewhat the same manner that Mr. Sam Pound had just dived into the wooden coal-hod at the Trailing Indian. He had to remove sundry things: Sir Dene's military orders (he had one on his coat to-night,) parchments belonging to the estate, and such like. Mrs. Letsom, her face and fingers alike eager, stood by and held the light.

But the case of diamonds was not there. Sir Dene sunk down in a chair speechless. Gander raised a hallabaloo.

For once the faithful old man-servant lost his wits. He flew out into the passages, shouting out wildly, "Thieves! thieves!" Louisa followed, wild too, screaming in her turn, and whirling the candle about.

It brought out the people who were attiring themselves in their dressing-rooms. Lady Lydia, Aunt Ann, Captain Clanwaring, and his brother Otto. The captain demanded whether the house had gone mad.

"No," said Gander, "it's the diamonds that be gone. We've had thieves in."

"The beautiful Clanwaring diamonds," shrieked Louisa. "And I was to have worn them to-night!"

Otto stood, half paralyzed. He looked at his mother, he looked at his brother; but they both went suddenly into their rooms again, and shut the doors. Going up to Louisa, he caught her hand.

"Say no more now, Louisa," he whispered in some agitation. "Hush it up. Hush it up by any means in your power—if you value this house's peace and good name."

"Hush it up!" retorted Louisa Lorrom in a loud tone of rage. "Hush up the theft of our diamonds! You cannot know what you are saying, Otto Clanwaring."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HOW IT CAME ABOUT.

BY OLIVE KING.

"Oh, Lesley, I am so glad! Only think, here is a letter from Helen, and she says she is coming to stay a month with me."

And the bright little figure of Annie Lindsay fluttered out upon the piazza, and a plump, small hand fell confidingly upon the shoulder of Lesley Grey, her affianced, as, seated in a camp chair, he leisurely smoked a segar, looking off into the distance with a sort of vague idea that he was the most comfortably happy man in existence, and that he *deserved* to be. But the joyous tones awakened him from his semi-trance, and reaching up for the letter, with an effort at curiosity, he inquired:

"Who is Helen, Annie?"

"Helen? Oh! I forgot that you had not the honor of an acquaintance. She is a kind of a cousin, or we claim her as such. And so sweet! You wouldn't believe it. Come right down to facts, and I don't suppose she is any relation at all; her second cousin married my great-aunt, her grandfather's cat ran across my grandfather's peach-orchard, or something of that kind; but we all love her so much, we will *cousin* her. She was a beautiful girl, and two years ago she married an old fellow by the name of Montfort, who had the good sense to die about six months afterward, and our Helen is now an interesting young widow. Say, Lesley, ar'nt you glad she's coming?"

"No."

"You are not? Well, now, that's cool."

"Can't help it. I'm not glad; I'm *sorry*."

"Why sorry?"

"Because your time will be wholly occupied with her, and I wanted you all to myself."

"You are a selfish dog, Lesley. You used to take pleasure in anything that gratified me. Don't you think you will live through the visit?"

"I am almost afraid not."

"The infliction will be severe."

"Terribly so."

Each was jesting, yet something jarred. Man like, he was really annoyed at the coming of Mrs. Montfort; and, girl like, Annie took a malicious pleasure in heightening his vexation. She paraded her delight and her preparations for Helen continually before his eyes, and met her on her arrival with an exaggerated cordiality, and an affectation of being utterly engrossed and forgetful of Lesley, that irritated that young gentleman as much as she could possibly have desired.

He submitted to an introduction because he had to, but from that moment he treated the lady with the most marked indifference, even rudeness, and she, Mrs. Montfort, who otherwise might never have given him a thought, began to open her brown eyes very wide, and very beautiful eyes they were. Mrs. Montfort was, too, a very beautiful woman. Hers was not a beauty which consists in perfectness of feature, but that attractive, dangerous, ever shifting beauty of expression which keeps one constantly watching and tracing it. She was also a lady used to admiration, and when she found herself slighted in that boorish manner by a handsome young man, she was seized with a very Alexander-like determination to discover and overcome his prejudices, whatever they were.

Lesley Grey, in spite of the annoyance caused by Annie's seeming indifference to him, was not blind, and almost as soon as formed, he discovered Mrs. Montfort's resolution, and secretly vowed to defeat it; but his resolve and his desire that it should be carried out successfully, kept him constantly thinking of her; so the result was, that when together, the thoughts of each were occupied with the other, and there was waging constantly, but secretly, a terrible battle of wills—and as one would naturally suppose where a very handsome man and woman, mutually attractive, are forced against their wishes to think continually of each other, they, very much to their own dismay, fell desperately in love.

And a very uncomfortable position to be placed in it was, too, especially for Lesley, who was now forced to assume an incivility he was very far from feeling. While Annie, seeing his coldness and indifference to her friend, was entirely deceived, and thinking to punish him for his rudeness, lost no opportunity of bringing him into the presence of Helen, and then, in her roguish capriciousness, scampering off, leaving them alone for hours.

It was a dangerous game—what wonder that Annie lost; or that Lesley, annoyed at first, should by degrees cast her from his thoughts, and abandon himself to fate, quieting his conscience with the belief that he had been faithful until Annie's inexcusable conduct had driven him away from her.

It would seem that everything is predestined—that the hand of fate is discoverable in all the events of human life—else why such unlooked for denouements?

There had been planned an excursion on the lake, and every one had looked forward to it with eager expectation as a day of happiness and joyous recreation. Many a bright eye had watched the going down of the sun upon the eve preceding, fearful lest the elements might prove adverse.

In spite of fears and anxiety, however, the morning dawned clear and beautiful, but Annie, almost for the first time in her life, was confined to her bed with a terrible nervous headache; and despite the suffering of the little idol he had once worshipped, Lesley Grey experienced a sudden joyous flutter of the heart when he became aware that Mrs. Montfort alone was to accompany him.

As in all excursions, whether one will or no, an adventure is almost sure to crowd itself in, so in this one.

A sudden gale, a capsized boat, and a drenched company completed the day's entertainment, and destiny willed that Mrs. Montfort should be borne to the shore in the arms of Lesley Grey, who, forgetful of his whilom resolution, deposited the seemingly inanimate form upon the grassy bank, and, bending over it, chafed the small hands, and imprinting kisses upon cheek, brow and lip, earnestly entreated that she would live for him, while the deep flush that overspread the beautiful face would seem to argue that the object of solicitude was not quite so unconscious as appearances had indicated. In that moment they understood one another—each knew and read aright the feeling that had been awakened. And what wonder, as days followed, that Mrs. Montfort, looking into the happy face of Annie, who, as yet, in her innocence, suspected nothing, felt the pangs of an accusing conscience.

Often in the ensuing fortnight did she resolve to go away and never see again the man she had so lately learned to love, and as often was the resolution broken. A spell was upon her: a power from which she could not escape held her in its vice-like grasp, and she was forced to submit.

It was evening, and Helen Montfort, alone in the parlor, watched through the open window the bright stars as they came out, sparkling and beautiful, in the azure vault of heaven. A step approached her. It was Lesley Grey. He knelt beside her, his brain burning, his heart throbbing. His hair brushed her cheek, and by an unconscious movement her hand touched his. He seized it, and pressed it wildly to his lips, while she drew back, pale and frightened, and would have left him, but he held her fast.

"Stop one moment; hear me," he said. "Helen, I love you, and I have been rash enough to believe the feeling reciprocal."

She drew back, as though the words pained her.

"Do not say that," she murmured.

"Is it not so?"

"You are betrothed to Annie."

"Annie does not love me. She has ceased to care for me, and the betrothal, agreement, contract, anything you are pleased to call it, is broken by her, and, as a consequence, is no longer binding upon me; but, were I engaged to a thousand Annies, I should love you, and you only."

"Oh, Lesley!"

The voice was Annie's, but there was no agony or supplication in the tones. Entering quietly, she had seen her lover kneeling at the feet of another mistress. Of course, they were frightened, both of them; but there was no particular occasion for it. Annie was human, wonderfully human, and her affections, which she supposed fixed upon Lesley Grey, had also wandered, and John Smith (anonymatic name) was the individual whose presence had haunted her dreams for at least a week. She wanted to tell Lesley, and had come for that purpose—but he made it easier for her than she could have hoped or imagined.

There was a double wedding in that house the next month, and everybody was suited, and with that pleasant information this little sketch happily closes.

How a Mosquito Presents His Bill.

We do not know that there is much satisfaction, after you have had your blood sucked, to be told precisely how it was done; but here is a very learned description of the trade manners of the pestilent little "swamp angel" who stings with his mouth:—

The mosquito has a proboscis like an elephant, only not so large. It will, however, look nearly as large under a good microscope. He cannot do as many handy things with it as the elephant can do with his, but he can cause a great deal of annoyance in a small way with it.

It is barely the thing to say that the mosquito bites us, for he has no teeth. The microscope reveals the fact that he carries a pair of scissors inside of his proboscis—the neatest and sharpest little cutting tools you ever saw. He gets his living by these. They are two delicate little blades, and are placed alongside of each other.

When he is ready to make a meal off of us, he first buzzes around with those beautiful wings, and sings a pleasant little song. If we let him quietly settle down, he picks out a place on our skin which is just to his liking. He is very delicate about it. When he gets ready, he puts his proboscis down, and pushes the little scissors out, and makes a neat cut, so that he can suck the blood out.

Then he drinks as much blood as he wants, and is done his dinner. But he does not leave yet. He is going to pay his bill. He has taken our blood, and so will leave us something in exchange *for* it. With all his faults, he is an honest little fellow—after his fashion. He has the pay in his pocket, ready to squeeze out before he goes. It is poison, but that makes no difference to him. It is the best he has to give us.

His poison pocket is at the head of his proboscis, and at the lower end of his proboscis he has another little pocket, into which he puts poison enough for one dose. This poison is very powerful. A very little of it makes the place where the mosquito puts it very sore.

After he has sucked our blood, he puts the drop of poison into the place he took the blood from. It is not the bite or the cut that the mosquito makes that hurts us, but the dropping of this powerful poison into our flesh. If this mosquito was large enough to give a powerful dose of this poison, it would be bad for us. If he were as big as a kitten, and his poison as strong in proportion, a "bite" from him would kill us.

☞ A youngster electrified a Pittsfield congregation, by rushing into church and shouting to his father that the "Pigs are out."

☞ At North Hatfield, Mass., it is stated that in the early days a road was laid out which was described as "running from Pochang meadow to the stream where old Mr. Doolittle's horse died."

☞ A potato bug was found the other day on the apex of a church spire in Woodstock. He used it as an observatory.

☞ An Iowa preacher is accused of frightening a boy to death.

☞ The Louisville *Courier-Journal* says the most remarkable thing of the present century is the fact that Colonel Jim Fisk, even after his brilliant achievements on the memorable 12th, has announced his determination neither to enter the lecture field nor to run for the Presidency.

☞ Great souls have *wills;* feeble ones have only *wishes.*

FAR AND NEAR.

☞ Lightning struck a mosquito in Georgia.

☞ A gentleman took a lady out for a drive the other day, and came home with a false curl attached to the button on the side of his cap. He wondered how it could have got there.

☞ A recent wedding in Vermont was the happy climax to thirty-nine years of industrious courtship.

☞ Young ladies at the seaside wear their hats at the breakfast table to hide the crimping pins.

☞ A new style of obituary item has been invented. Here is the first sample: "Francis Bohle, of New York—third-story window."

☞ A vase in a California hotel is labelled 2th picks.

☞ "I live in Julia's eyes," said an affected dandy in Coleman's hearing. "I don't wonder at it," replied George, "since I observed she had a *sty* in them when I saw her last."

☞ They tell of a man out West whose hair is so red that he has to wear fly-nets over his head to keep the candle moths from flying in.

☞ A cotemporary records how the risibilities of a congregation were excited when the choir sang—

"Oh catch the flee, oh catch the flee, oh catch the fleeting hours."

☞ A San Francisco doctor advertised for a "good office cat." He has already received 243 fellows, with the Southern counties yet to hear from.

☞ *First Young Lady*—"So poor Susan is dead?" *Second Young Lady*—"Yes, poor thing. She suffered terribly, didn't she? And only think, she couldn't wear that beautiful silk dress her mother gave her, and it's too short for her sister."

☞ A Nashua gentleman said to an old lady who had brought up a family of children near the river, "I should think you would have lived in constant fear that some of them would have got drowned." "Oh, no," responded the old lady, "we only lost three or four that way."

☞ A colored woman in Lynchburg, Va., fell out of a third-story window, striking the ground head-foremost. They are filling up the hole. She wasn't injured.

☞ Bismarck appears to be a popular name in Detroit, as there are sixteen babies of that name on one street.

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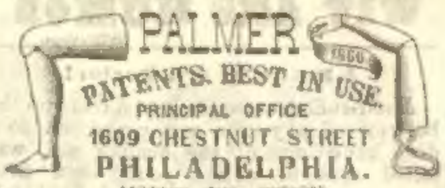

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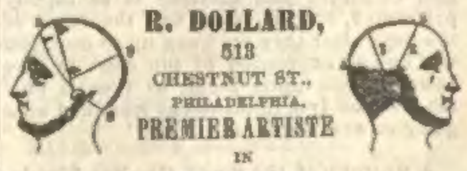

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WIT AND HUMOR.

A Doctor as is a Doctor!

A self-sufficient humbug who took up the business of physician and pretended to a deep knowledge of the healing art, was called upon to visit a young man with apoplexy. Bolus gazed long and hard, felt his pulse and pocket, looked at his tongue and his wife, and finally gave vent to the following:

"I think he's a gone fellow!"

"No, no!" exclaimed the sorrowing wife, "do not say that."

"Yes," returned Bolus, lifting up his hat and eyes heavenward at the same time, "yes I do say so, there arn't any hope, not the least mite—he's got an attack of nihil fit in his lose frontis—"

"Where?" cried the startled wife.

"In his lose frontis, and can't be cured without some trouble and a great deal of pains. You see his whole paletary system is deranged; fustly, his vex populy is pressin' on his advalorum; secondly, his cutacarpial cutaneout has swelled considerably, if not more; thirdly, and lastly, his solar ribbs are in a concussed state; and he ain't got any money, consequently he's bound to die."

A Suspicious Countryman.

A zealous representative of the Young Men's Christian Association was a few days ago drumming up recruits for the "noon prayer-meeting." On the street he met Mr. ——, now residing outside the city limits. The representative of the Young Men's Christian Association accosted him, and the following conversation ensued:

"Do you reside in the city, Mr. —— ?"

"No, sir; I live in the country."

"We have a prayer-meeting around here, and would be glad to have friends from the country meet with us; will you come?"

(Suspiciously)—"A prayer-meeting?"

"Yes, sir; come in and get a blessing."

(More suspiciously)—"No, you don't; you can't come any of your confidence games on me, sir!"

He had evidently been reading the papers.

Hannah on the Rail.

There is a station on the Pittsburg, Fort Wayne, and Chicago Railroad called Hanna, in honor of a deceased citizen of Fort Wayne. A train stopped there the other day, and the brakeman, after the manner of his class, thrust his head inside the door and called out "Hanna," loud and long. A young lady, probably endowed with the poetic appellation of Hannah, supposing he was addressing her, and shocked at his familiarity on so short an acquaintance, frowned like a thunder cloud, and retorted, "Shut your mouth!" He shut it.

DISGUSTED.—A rural gent of eighteen summers invested in a banana on the cars, at Danbury, the other day. He carefully removed the peel, and put it on the seat by his side; then he broke the fruit up into small bits, eyeing it anxiously as he did so. When this was done he picked up the peel, shook it in his lap, and finally threw the pieces out of the window, remarking as he did so, "That's the fust of them prize packages I ever bought, an' it's the last, you bet."

TALKED IN MEETING.—A Middletown correspondent of the Hartford Post says;—"A friend of ours, who has a habit of sleeping in church, was overcome on Sunday by Morpheus, and when asleep he is something of a somniloquist. He is something of a sportsman, also, and dreamed he was hunting rabbits. During an eloquent passage in the sermon, he espied in his dream a rabbit, and startled the congregation by shouting, 'There he goes.' The effect can be better imagined than described. Our friend didn't sleep any more that day."

A LUDICROUS SITUATION.—One of the humorous papers has a very funny cut. It illustrates this scene:—An old gent is walking in his garden. Presently the milkman comes along outside the high garden wall, and gives his customary yell. Old gent hears something, but being very deaf, is unable to make out just what is wanted; so he puts his ear trumpet in place, and elevating the bell-end of it over the edge of the wall, exclaims, "Here!" Milkman takes it for a dish, empties a quart of milk into the old gentleman's ear, and goes on about his business! It is about as ludicrous a situation as can be imagined.

SMART BOY.—"I know what your beau's pretty white horse's name is," said a little boy to his grown-up sister, the other morning; "it's Damye." "Hush, Eddie," said the horrified sister, "that's a naughty word." "Well, I don't care if 'tis," said the juvenile, "that's his name, 'cos last night I was outside the fence when he stopped at the front gate, and I heard him say, 'Whoa, Damye!'"

JUST LIKE 'EM.—A Cincinnati paper brags a little over the dexterity with which its butcher boys do their work:—"The operation of killing and dressing is so rapidly performed, that if you study the faces of the hogs after they are hung up to cool, you will find an expression of the most intense bewilderment upon them, as though puzzling themselves to make out what had been going on and where they were."

A MEMBER of the South Carolina Legislature, an old bachelor by the name of Evans got off the following jeu d'esprit, lately:

Evans was introduced to a beautiful widow, also named Evans. The introduction was in this wise:

"Mr. Evans, permit me to introduce you to Mrs. Evans."

"Mrs. Evans!" exclaimed the spirited bachelor; "the very lady I have been in search of for the last forty years!"

AN intoxicated man saw two cars passing him the other evening with red and blue lights in the front and rear. His fuddled brain comprehended colored lights, and he was heard to say to himself—

"Must be pretty sick—sickly here; they're running drug stores round on wh(hic)wheels."

OH, THUNDER!—A pair of good-natured Irishmen, on a certain occasion, occupied the same bed. In the morning one of them inquired of the other, "Dennis, did you hear the thunder last night?" "No, Pat; did it thunder?" "Yes, it thundered as if heaven and airth would come together." "Why, thin, didn't ye wake me, for you know I can't slape when it thunders?"

THE SLANG OF THE DAY.

(Fragment of Fashionable Conversation.)

YOUTH—"A—awful hot, ain't it?"
MAIDEN—"Yes, awful!" *(Pause.)*
YOUTH—"A—awful jolly floor for dancing, ain't it?"
MAIDEN—"Yes, awful!" *(Pause.)*
YOUTH—"A—a—awful jolly sad about poor Mrs. ——, ain't it?"
MAIDEN—"Yes—quite too awful—" *(And so forth.)*

THE STAR-DOLLARS.

A German Legend.

WRITTEN FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Once roamed a lovely little maid,
Far over field and land,
And a wee loaf of coarse, black bread,
She carried in her hand,

And bitterly she moaned and wept:
"I have no friends at all,
No father and no mother dear,
A child so weak and small."

As thus she moaned, an old, old man,
Upon a crutch, drew near:
"For Heaven's sake, alms, my little maid!"
He begged with many a tear.

She gave to him the loaf of bread,
With words so sweet and mild;
Then saw she standing by her side,
A small, bareheaded child.

She gave the child her own warm hood,
And with her gold locks flying,
Passed to the brook-side, where a
Sick, half-clad girl was lying.

She wrapped her cloak round those chilled limbs,
Without a sigh or frown,
And to another beggar child,
She gave her only gown.

And now, the moonbeams softly fell,
And all of silvery sheen,
They wove for this sweet, pious child,
A robe fit for a queen.

And stars, a heap of dollars bright,
Rolled from Heaven's azure floor,
And rained into the dear child's lap
A never-failing store.

—FRANCES A. SHAW.

"This Seat is Engaged."

This railroad lie is getting to be a nuisance. So thought a gentleman the other day on a Boston and Albany train. "That is played out," said he to a well-dressed lady who had spread her skirts and her selfishness over two seats, while others were tired of standing. Suiting his action to the word, he took the seat that he had paid for, and out of which her meanness would have deprived him. Having the ride before me from Boston to Springfield, writes a correspondent of the Springfield Republican, I watched this thing. Here was a lady, with nurse and baby, who, in a crowded car, with two tickets, preempted four seats. There was a lady who at every stopping-place took the outside seat, and so arranged herself as to hinder from entering any but a bold intruder, and when the train started she would slide back into the inside seat. As the car began to fill up, another woman repelled a timid intruder with, "This seat is engaged," though he knew it was a lie. But the next comer, being a more travelled man, took it. My eye then fell on a caption in the "Selected Miscellany" of the day's Republican—"Why women are not magnanimous." The first sentence was: "What women in civilized countries mostly want is magnanimity," and the concluding sentence was: "Women are commonly trained to believe that so long as they are 'virtuous,' it is not requisite that they shall be sincere and magnanimous; therefore their common defects are insincerity and meanness."

Being a woman, I should have resented these sharp words of Mr. McCarty, but with these women around me, what could I do but blush for my sex? I was just then, however, greatly relieved by my little Johnny, who whispered, pointing at an elderly and extremely respectable-looking gentleman near us, "Mamma, that man tells lies." "How do you know, Johnny?" "Why, he says that seat is engaged, and it's a lie, mamma. Should you think that he would tell lies?" And my blue-eyed boy looked the elderly gentleman over thoroughly. I don't know who he was, but if he should read this, let him understand that he has impaired one little boy's confidence in nice-looking elderly gentlemen, and if he reads his Bible, let him meditate on the words of Jesus, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea." "Pooh," says the old gent, "that's the pious dodge! What's the sense of lugging your Christianity into a rail car?"

Ah! that is the question. Wouldn't a little of the Christianity we preach about and profess in churches be a good thing in rail cars? Ask the conductor what he thinks about it. I should like to hear a railroad conductor preach a lay sermon on human selfishness and meanness as he views it on the road. Was it not Lord Bacon that said, "Nothing more tests a man than travel?" That nothing tests a woman so much is the opinion of the writer.

Paris After the War.

A Paris letter says:—The first thing which strikes one on re-entering the city is the extraordinary animation of its streets. After all I had heard and read I imagined nothing but ruins and ashes, and fancy having been so busy, the reality was rather a relief than otherwise. I had seen Paris mournful and stupefied, as it were, under the iron rule of the Commune; I returned to find it awakening to new life and activity. When I passed through the Champs Elysees the sunshine was splendid, a number of well-dressed little girls were skipping merrily in the broad *allees*, while their mammas were keeping up a lively *causerie* over their lace or embroidery work, and I wondered how so quiet a scene could belong to the same city as the double row of crushed and battered-down houses I had just witnessed on my way from Courbevoie to the Barriere de l'Etoile.

To Make Home Happy.

To make home truly happy there should be no concealments; for they are the canker-worms. Let a woman tell her troubles and follies freely to her husband, and he will assist her out of them. He is her other self, not her judge and master. If a man confide in his wife, her penetration and quick wit will often see things that escaped him. We are in the world all day; our minds are occupied by many details; but she sits at home often alone, or with but an infant companion. She thinks over what her husband has told her, and sees it in many lights; and has had the time which he wanted. The discovery that there has been a secret excites jealousy, and loosens the ties of affection on either side. Without perfect and entire confidence, married happiness is seldom lasting.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

CLARK (Williamsport, Pa.,) writes: "I am a young man, 21 years of age, and am seriously thinking of matrimony. I have so far lived a rather unsettled life, and begin to think that it is about time for me to begin to sober down. I have a young lady friend whom I think a good deal of, though I can't say that I am exactly in love with her. I have read considerably of how love acts on people, and am not sure I have had the same kind of feeling. Now I don't think it right for any one to marry without love, and though I like this young lady very much, I can't say that I love her, and it would be very unfortunate if after I was married to her I should meet with some one else for whom I would feel that strong attraction of which we read in so many cases. Would it not be a risk in me in marrying without being more certain of my feelings? Have you ever heard of any cases of unhappiness from marrying under such circumstances?" Yes, we have read of several such cases—in novels; from which you seem to have derived your idea of love. It is true there are temperaments, even in real life, which might be exposed to the danger of which you speak. But such cases are exceptional. From what you say of your feelings you probably rank with that cooler brained class who never experience such passionate desires as form the staple of book-love. Just such a feeling as you appear to feel for your inamorata, often develops into an earnest affection, which will burn with steady brilliancy when the fierce flames of passion have burnt out and left but ashes. We think though that you can safely take time to look about you. You are still too young to marry. We would advise you to inquire of yourself for what you like the young lady, for her face, her disposition, or her powers of bread making. Much depends upon the answer. There is no particular occasion for you to wed for five or ten years yet, and you had best study your path carefully before taking the irrevocable step.

J. B. D. (Patterson, N. J.,) writes: "As you are kind enough to give advice to questioners, I make bold to trouble you, and will esteem it a favor if you will give me an early answer. My daughter, 17 years of age, has made a gentleman's acquaintance of whom I do not approve. He has the reputation of being dissipated, and is not at all the person that I would choose as a husband *for* my daughter. Yet she declares that she loves him, and in spite of all my commands she manages to meet him, and I am very much afraid they will marry without my consent. What would you advise me to do to break off this unfortunate connection? It has made me very unhappy. The girl has always been obedient to me, and even in this case pretends to obey me, but I know she does not. She is ruled only by her feelings, and will not listen to good advice. Please favor me with an answer, and I will be ever grateful." The loves of girls of that age are usually not very deep. Give her seriously to understand that she cannot marry *for* four or five years at least; forbid her seeing the gentleman outside of your house, but permit him to call on her there; make his acquaintance yourself, and satisfy yourself if you are correct in regard to his character. She will possibly change this youthful fancy under the influence of unrestricted acquaintance, while opposition, under the condition of things as represented, may drive her into a hasty marriage. If he really prove an unsuitable personage, and her fancy continues unchanged, you had better send her from home *for* a period. Change of scene and new acquaintances sometimes work wonders upon these girlish penchants.

JENNY (Detroit) writes: "I am in love with a young lady to whom I am engaged to be married, and the wedding day fixed. I have just learned, to my unspeakable surprise, that she has also engaged herself to another gentleman. This is certainly playing double, with a vengeance. I have loved her warmly, and have had every reason to believe that my affection was returned. You may imagine then my feelings on being told of this strange circumstance. I am entirely in a quandary, and inclined to think that she must have taken leave of her senses. What would you advise me to do in such a case? I still love her, and do not feel willing to lose her, yet unless this matter can be satisfactorily explained, and I don't see how it can be, could not marry her." If you cannot see any explanation of the circumstance it would be advisable to question her, perhaps she may be able to afford this explanation. Certainly, unless she can explain it by declaring the whole story a falsehood, there does not appear any clear way of escaping from the conclusion that she is a fool. Perhaps, however, as you hint, her brain may be slightly turned. If so, you need not seek further; the vagaries of insane people are beyond explanation. In all such cases the first thing to do is to place yourself right in regard to the facts. There may be twenty circumstances, of which you are not now aware, that may give affairs a very different aspect. Never form important decisions upon hearsay.

STAM (Columbus, O.) writes: "I have long been a reader of the Post, and am pleased with your idea of a correspondence column. Will you be kind enough to inform me if astronomers do not generally believe that all the planets are inhabited? I cannot believe otherwise myself, but would like to know if my belief agrees with that of scientific men generally." This is one of those cases in which it is impossible to arrive at positive knowledge, so that every one is privileged to believe as he pleases. There is probably a great diversity of opinion among astronomers upon the subject. Certainly none of these inhabitants have ever been seen, unless it be the "Man in the Moon." We know that the other planets resemble the Earth in material, but that they exist under conditions which may differ greatly from those obtaining here. There are however, strong arguments in favor of their having thinking inhabitants.

QUIRY (Baton Rouge, La.) asks: "How do you account for the fact that a fire does not burn freely in the sunlight? What influence is the sun supposed to have upon flame? I have been much puzzled by this strange fact, and would like to know what scientific authorities say upon the subject. Please favor me with a reply in your next issue." The authorities say that your fact is not a fact, and we cannot attempt to account for facts of this character. Experiments have been made to test this belief, and the result tends to prove that there is no difference in the vigor of combustion in and out of sunlight. Appearances in this, as in many other cases, are deceptive.

LETTY (Lancaster, Mo.,) writes: "I have been for years a reader of your valuable paper, from which I derive much pleasure and instruction. Will you be so kind as to give me your advice in the following case? I am a poor girl in the world and do not know how to make my living. I am not able to do housework, and I cannot get a school where I might make my living by teaching, and I have no trade. I hope you will favor me with an early answer." There are many trades which can be learned in a short time, and which would soon prove profitable to you. You know best at what business you would be likely to prove efficient. There is always a demand for good dress-makers, milliners—and for talented hands, at any other business. The only advice we can give you, under the circumstances, is to decide for what business you are best suited, and to take advantage of the first opportunity of learning it.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER (Fairburg, Ill.,) asks: "Will you be so kind as to inform me, in your answers to correspondents, how the musical composer, Auber, died? Whether he was killed in a riot, or whether he died a natural death? I have heard considerable about him, but could not find out any circumstances attending his death." He died in Paris, on the 13th of last May, at his house in the Rue St. Georges, while the Communists were pulling down the house of his friend and neighbor, M. Thiers. This circumstance may have hastened his death.

T. S. HONDAY, (Lexington, Minn.,) writes: "I hope you will answer for me these two questions. Will the process of boiling render water, in any measure, like distilled? Is there much earthy matter in maple molasses?" Boiling is much more likely to produce the opposite effect. The process of distilling secures the water in a pure state, leaving the impurities behind. The process of boiling, on the contrary, drives off a portion of the water as vapor, so that the water remaining is more impure, for equal volumes, than before. We do not exactly understand your last question. Do you mean to ask, to use common language, if there is much dirt in maple molasses? If this is your meaning, we would answer no, not usually. Of course, there may be cases in which the molasses is not kept in proper condition.

ROSIE LEWIS (Edina, Iowa,) writes: "Please to inform me through your valuable paper, how to make Skeleton Leaves and Phantom Flowers." The process is too complicated to fully understand from a brief description. The leaves are first steeped in soft water for about six weeks, or until the soft portions have become decayed. They are then placed in warm water, and the pulpy matter carefully rubbed off. In some cases a further soaking may be required before the fibres can be entirely cleaned. They are next bleached with the chloride of lime or soda. Afterward well washed and dried on unsized paper. They must next be pressed in a book with a weight, so that they will dry in proper shape. Stems may be formed of sewing thread, stiffened with gum arabic. These may be tied to a central wire so as to form a bouquet. The whole to be covered with glass.

AGRICULTURAL.

How the Horses were Stopped.

A frightful disaster was recently averted in England by the good sense and bravery of a Cornish farmer. The horses of a stage coach had become unruly, and dragged the reins from the frightened driver, when the farmer, who was inside, forced himself upon the back of the shaft-horse, and thence to the leader. By patting and caressing, he guided the terrible beasts down a steep, mountainous road, through the narrow streets of a crowded village, and finally brought them safe to a halt in the open country, after a mad drive of eight or ten miles. Commenting on the farmer's method, and the award of a medal for the act, a London paper says:—"It was odd that it should have required the visit of an Ohio farmer, some years ago, to make so elementary a truth clear, but in fact Rarey gave the truth a practical application. Horses, though docile and gentle, are timid and nervous; noise and violence will only aggravate their terror if once roused; but they can be soothed if a man has the sense and temper to go about his task in the right way. Rarey was an apostle of the truest humanity, and it is only to be regretted that much of his teaching fell on so stony and ungenial soil as the coarse nature of English hinds and carmen."

Kindness to Cows.

Kindness must be constantly exercised towards milch cows, and we might add towards all domestic animals. Very often young cows are restless or irritable, especially during the operation of milking, but whatever the cause gentleness is the only treatment that should be allowed—violence or even harshness never. There are many causes after recent calving that may produce inquietude, but no other remedy will be effectual. A young animal never forgets ill treatment, and a recurrence of similar circumstances will remind the cow of former punishment. Farmers should allow no one to milk, especially to milk their young cows, who are not always gentle and uniform in the operations of handling and milking the animals.

Price of Beef in England.

In England the price of beef rarely reaches twelve cents per pound. And this is the case when farmers hold their farm as yearly tenants. These farmers buy stock cattle, or cows or sheep, and then buy corn or linseed cake from America on which they feed them. Why, then, can they sell their meats at twelve cents per pound? The answer is that the English farmer feeds his stock for the sake of the manure; and the more stock he feeds the better does it pay. There is no other explanation.—*Pacific Rural Press.*

IT seems to me singular that farmers north do not come south to look at farms and land when they wish to buy, during the summer season when crops are growing and the land speaks for itself, instead of coming down in winter when crops are housed and computed at guess work, and purchases are made at guess work. There would be more certainty in their investments, if they saw what the land could do for itself.—*F. K. S. Maryland.*

THE RIDDLER.

Charade.

On ancient rocks, in dim old woods,
Or by some shaded spring,
Lovely in all nature's moods,
My first is seen to cling.
My second leads to knowledge, power,
And guards with secure art—
Shows scenes of joy where sorrows lower,
And cheers the miser's heart.
My third is traced in sculpture fair,
Part of the human frame,
And when my whole sounds on the air,
A pest it doth proclaim.

Baltimore, Md. EMILY.

Word Square.

To gather.
A conception.
A prison room.
A sea-weed.

Louisville, Ky. EDWARD WARD.

Biblical Square Word.

A golden vessel used in the temple service.
A prophet supposed to have been slain by a lion.
A Jewish month.
A name of the Supreme Being.

ISOLA.

Probability Problem.

A penny is laid at random on a common die. If the diameter of the penny is equal to a diagonal of a face of the die, what is the probability that the penny will not fall off?

ARTEMAS MARTIN.

McKean, Erie Co., Pa.

☞ An answer is requested.

Conundrums.

☞ When was Napoleon I. most shabbily dressed? Ans.—When out at Elba.

☞ Why is the palace of the Louvre the cheapest ever erected? Ans.—Because it was built for one sovereign—and finished for another.

☞ Why is the Empress of the French always in bad company? Ans.—Because she is ever surrounded by Paris-ites.

[We wish to impress one fact on your recollection, which is, that many people are extremely fond of Paris-sights.]

☞ Why ought the patriot Garibaldi to be now called simply Garidi? Ans.—Because they have extracted the bal(l) from Garibaldi long ago.

☞ Why is your thumb, when putting on a glove, like eternity? Ans.—Because it's ever-last-in'.

[We wish the glove was!]

☞ When is a baby most like a cherub? Ans.—When it continually doth cry.

☞ Why is a parrot's perch like a person's special qualification? Ans.—Because he plumes himself on it.

☞ When does a man feel girlish? Ans.—When he makes his maiden speech.

☞ Why is an empty cabin like a bird of the poultry class? Ans.—Because it is a chanticleer (shanty clear.)

Answers to Last.

ENIGMA—General George Washington.

WORD SQUARE—

BRUSH
ROMEO
UMBER
SEERS
HORSE

WORD SQUARE—

PLATE
LAURA
AUDIT
TRIPE
EATER

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of May 27th—Chance is 1-10.—O. R. Sheldon.

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of April 22d—The radii are 3½.—O. R. Sheldon.

Answer to A. Martin's PROBLEM of May 6th—Sides of quadrilateral are 16.12 plus 13.60 plus 13.88 plus 19.69 plus feet.—Geo. W. Sublette.

Answer to Geo. W. Sublette's PROBLEM of June 10—The numbers are 80 and 20.—Geo. W. Sublette, J. N. Soders.

Answer to Ego Geo's PROBLEM of July 22d—5 feet.—Ego Geo, O. R. Sheldon.

Answer to Ego Geo's PROBLEM of July 15th—54 6-11 min. past 4 o'clock.—Ego Geo, O. R. Sheldon.

RECEIPTS.

PRESERVED GREEN CORN.—Boil on the cob until the milk ceases to flow when the grain is pricked. Cut off the corn and pack in stone jars in the following order:—A layer of salt at the bottom, half an inch deep. Then one of corn two inches in depth, another half-inch of salt, and so on until the jar is nearly filled. Let the topmost layer of salt be double the depth of the others, and pour over all melted—not hot—lard. Press upon this, when nearly hard, thick white paper, cut to fit the mouth of the jar. Keep it in a cool place. Soak over night before using it. Green corn is difficult to can, but I know it will keep well if put up in this way. And, strange to tell, be so fresh after the night's soaking as to require salt when you boil it for the table. Should the top layer be musty, dig lower still, and you will probably be rewarded for the search.

BONE FELON.—Of all painful things, can there be any so excruciatingly painful as bone felon? We know of none that flesh is heir to. As this malady is quite frequent, and subject of much earnest consideration, we give the latest recipe for its cure, which is given by that high authority, the London Lancet:

"As soon as the disease is felt, put directly over the spot a fly blister, about the size of your thumb nail, and let it remain for six hours, at the expiration of which time, directly under the surface of the blister may be seen the felon, which can be instantly taken out with the point of a needle or a lancet."—*Drug. Circular.*